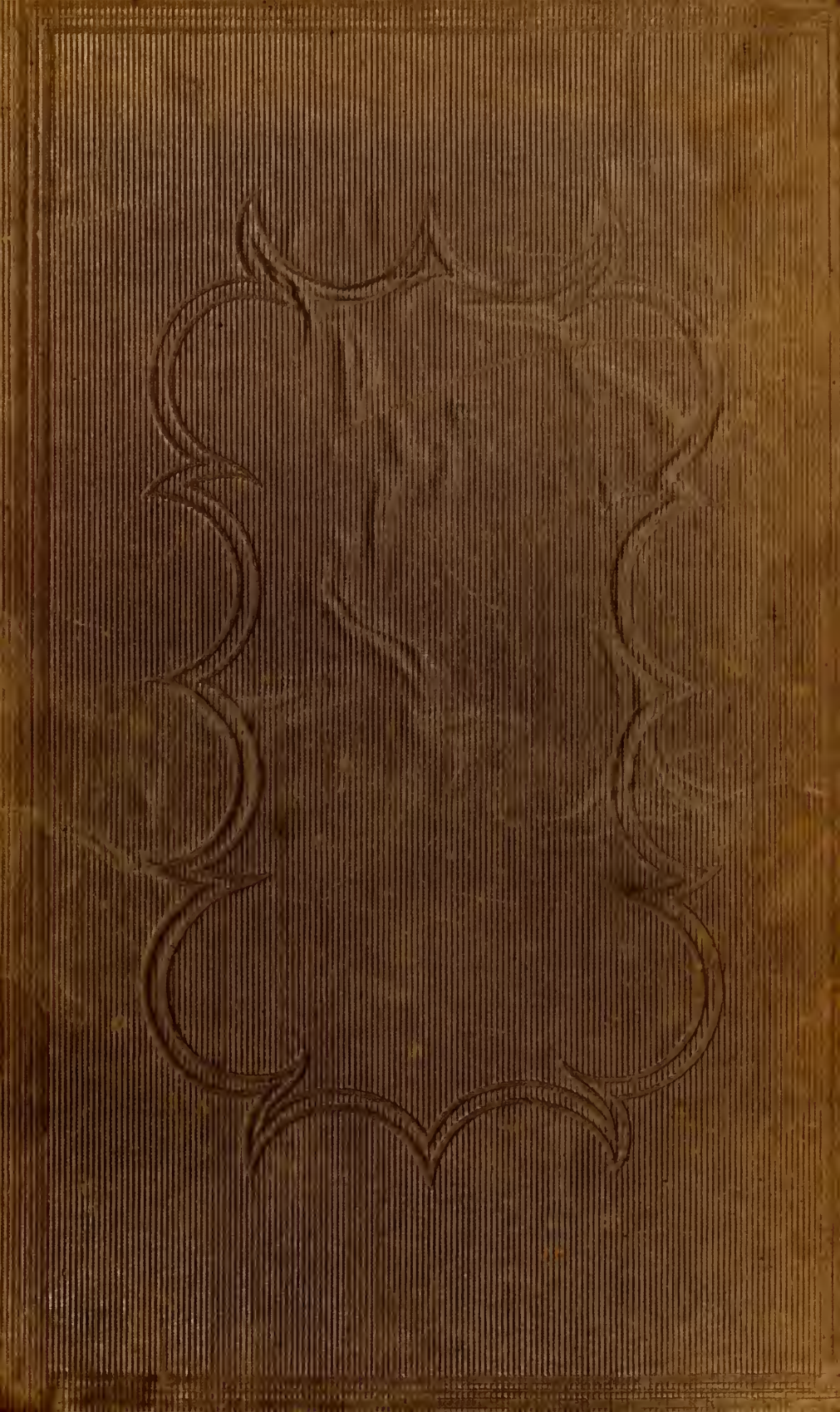




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No.

THE
NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR
GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

VOLUME IV.

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P R E F A C E,

BY

THE REV. HUGH WHITE, A. M.

CURATE OF ST. MARY'S, DUBLIN.

HAVING been requested by the Proprietors of the New Irish Pulpit to write a preface for the forthcoming volume, I have willingly complied with their request, as affording me an opportunity of bearing my humble but cordially-approving testimony on behalf of a work, which appears to me most deserving of Christian patronage and support, as being calculated to advance the glory of God, our Saviour, and the everlasting salvation of immortal souls. For, if preaching be God's appointed instrument for promoting His own glory in the salvation of sinners, what reason can there be to restrict the promised blessing of the Holy Spirit (without which all preaching must be utterly in vain,) to the proclamation, by a living voice, of the message of redeeming love, and to suppose that that blessing will be withheld from the announcement of the very same message, when embodied in a printed form, as originally delivered by the ambassador of Christ.

I am well aware of the great difference, both as to pleasure and profit, between listening to a preached, and reading a written sermon ; and how much, both of attractiveness and impressiveness, the best

composed discourse must lose, in being read, by the loss of all that almost undefinable charm, which the preached sermon derives from the living eloquence of the eye, the voice, the whole countenance and deportment of the preacher, as he is seen kindling into the fervor of a glowing animation, imparted to his own soul by his glorious theme, and imparting a kindred animation to the hearts of all who hear !

Still, I would contend, that there is no assignable cause why the sermon, which, when originally preached, was honored as the instrument of drawing sinners to the Saviour, or building up believers in their most holy faith, should be stript of all its persuasiveness and power, when its spirit is transfused into a printed form.

If this be admitted, it will not surely require any lengthened or laboured demonstration to prove the value of a volume, which contains such a number of the faithful, energetic, and affectionate addresses and appeals of so many of the most devoted and distinguished ministers of the Irish Church ; addresses and appeals, which, we doubt not, were abundantly blest in the delivery to the souls of many hearers, and which, we cannot but cherish the hope, have been and will be blest to the souls of many readers.

There is one circumstance, which stamps a peculiar value on this volume, in my estimation, and that is, the unity of doctrine, on all vital points, connected with the glory of the Saviour, and the salvation of the sinner, which pervades the whole work ; so that it can safely be recommended for family reading, to those who are providentially constrained to absent themselves from the sanctuary on the Lord's day, and to conduct the services of the Sabbath at home. The sermons, which compose this volume, exhibit the harmonious testimony of many witnesses to the same saving truths—all agreeing in faithful adherence to that apostolic exhortation and example, which forms the motto of the work, "to preach Jesus Christ, and Him crucified, as the wisdom of God and the power of God, unto salvation, to every one that believeth !" Yes ! it is emphatically the charm, the value of this volume, that in it, as in

Scripture, "Christ is all, in all!"—the Alpha and Omega—the sum and substance of the sinner's trust and confidence—of the believer's happiness and hope! The essential deity, the gracious offices, the divine character, the glorious salvation of Jehovah-Jesus, are here faithfully exhibited, and, in many instances, most eloquently enforced. His all-sufficient sacrifice is here uniformly set forth as His believing people's exclusive ground of trust, for the pardon of their sins—His infinitely meritorious righteousness, as their exclusive title to eternal glory—His all-prevailing intercession, as their exclusive plea for the acceptance of every service, and the bestowment of every blessing! His love is here declared to be their sweetly constraining motive to a life of holiness and devotedness—His example, the pattern, which in all things they are to follow—His character, the model, to which their own is, in every feature, to be conformed—and His glory, the object, which, in every word and action of their life, they are to desire to advance!

Thus, however the various witnesses in this volume may differ as to style or illustration, they all agree in those great fundamental truths, which ascribe all the glory of man's salvation, from first to last, unto Him that sitteth upon the throne—unto the Lamb that was slain—and to that Spirit, who sanctifieth all the elect children of God! thus rendering equal honor to each Divine Person of the adorable Trinity, by showing, that salvation, in its full sense, is equally the work of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; and leading the pardoned and purified sinner to concentrate all his affections on his Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, as the triune God of his salvation.

If, then, the exhibition of the love of God the Father, as manifested in not sparing His own Son, but delivering Him to death, even the death of the cross, as a propitiation for our sins—of the love of God the Son, even "His exceeding great love in dying for us," "the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God"—and the love of God the Holy Ghost, as displayed in enlightening, sanctifying, and comforting the children of God—if this exhibition be, as Scripture

uniformly declares that it is, the most effectual means for subduing the natural enmity of man's alienated heart against God, and constraining him, by the irresistible attractions of redeeming love, to cast down the arms of his rebellion at the foot of the cross, and to devote himself to the service of Him, who has bought him with His blood—then must the value of a volume of sermons, in which this stupendous display of divine love is faithfully and affectionately exhibited, be at once appreciated and acknowledged by all, who believe that the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is heaven's own appointed instrument for promoting the “glory of God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will amongst men!”

Nor is it unworthy of observation, in speaking of the value of this volume of sermons, that, while the Divine Saviour is herein exhibited, in all the fulness of His grace and glory, as the only sanctuary, where the transgressor can flee for safety, from the pursuing vengeance of a broken law—while the convinced sinner is directed to confide, undoubtingly and undividedly, in that atonement for sin, offered up on Calvary's cross, by which a brighter flood of celestial splendor is poured around every divine attribute, and the salvation of man is made to redound to the glory of God—there is an equally faithful exhibition, within the compass of the volume, of the necessity and nature of that “holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord,” and which is here delineated, in its scriptural character, as consisting in conformity to the character of the Son of God, and represented, even as the Scriptures set it forth, as the seal of the Spirit on the believer's soul, stamping it with the image and superscription of God—as the infallible evidence of a saving trust in the imputed righteousness of the Redeemer—and as the essence of meetness for an inheritance among the saints in light, for the enjoyment of a holy heaven, and the presence of a holy God!

Now, when all these considerations are combined together, and it is further remembered, that, but for the instrumentality of this volume, most, if not all, of the sermons it contains, would have been lost to the

Christian Church, instead of being, as they now are, preserved as a permanent and precious depository of scriptural truth, enforced with all the faithfulness and earnestness of Christian love, glowing in the hearts of devoted ministers of Christ, surely I cannot but feel fully warranted in most cordially recommending the New Irish Pulpit to the patronage and support of all, who desire to be instrumental in spreading abroad the saving knowledge of "Christ crucified," in the full scriptural meaning and extent of that glorious doctrine, viewed both as the only foundation of a sinner's hopes, and the most powerful incentive to a believer's devotedness of heart and life to the service of the God of his salvation !

One further claim on the approval of the Christian public, possessed by this volume, I cannot forbear noticing, namely, that this valuable periodical is the means of preserving for the benefit of the Church of Christ, and extensively circulating, those soul-stirring appeals to Christian philanthropy and zeal, on behalf of the various missionary and other religious societies, which are annually delivered in our metropolis, during the period of the anniversaries of these societies, and thus spreading throughout the length and breadth of the land, and even to distant countries, that sacred flame of holy fervor, energetic exertion, and self-denying liberality, in the missionary cause, which these appeals have so often kindled in the hearts of those, who have heard them from the preacher's lips.

When it is remembered that the work, possessing such strong claims on Christian approbation and support, while executed, in point of its editorial arrangements, in the most creditable manner, is sold at so moderate a price, as can scarcely repay the proprietors for their expenditure in bringing it out, I feel that I may legitimately call on my beloved brethren in the ministry, whether in this or in the sister country, to extend towards it their cordial and influential patronage; and on all its friends and subscribers to increase their exertions on its behalf, that it may be more widely circulated, and more liberally supported.

And, in conclusion, I would express my earnest hope and prayer, that the divine blessing may abundantly accompany this volume ; and that the Holy Spirit may vouchsafe, in His infinite condescension, to honour its instrumentality, by making it, through His own divine power, the means of drawing many a sinner to the Saviour's feet, and stirring up many a child of God to adorn the gospel of His grace by a more consistent exhibition of the Christian character—a more faithful discharge of every Christian duty—and a more entire consecration of soul and body, time and talents, to the advancement of a Saviour's glory !

HUGH WHITE.

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THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS FOR 1839.

—ooo—

THE PROPRIETORS OF THE NEW IRISH PULPIT have no apprehension of reproof from those who take an interest in the Work, which, at the beginning of a new year, they have again the privilege of submitting to their patronage, when they say, that they consider the path of duty in which they feel themselves called to labour, marked out by the highest authority which the Christian acknowledges upon earth.

The Holy Prophets and Apostles, inspired by the Holy Spirit to proclaim the word of the living God to men, were also taught to commit to writing the testimony which they delivered, to which we are indebted for the lively oracles of our salvation; and it seems but an effort of Christian fidelity, to follow in the path prescribed by eternal wisdom, when the faithful expositions of the everlasting Gospel are rescued from the evanescent lot of extemporaneous pulpit eloquence, and preserved, it is humbly hoped, as a means of durable, diffusive blessings, when the faithful witnesses of truth from whose lips they have proceeded, have passed away from this transitory scene of earthly labour, to rest with Him whose salvation they have proclaimed to men.

The Proprietors entreat their readers to recollect, that they not only present to them, in these volumes, the faithful testimony of men who preach the everlasting Gospel—who maintain the principles of our holy, apostolic Church, in opposition to the falsehoods and delusions of Socinian and Popish ignorance and apostasy—but that they present to them that testimony which, but for their labours, would, in all human probability, be lost to the Church and to the world. The sermons printed in these volumes are either contributed by the preacher himself, or taken down by the Editors from the lips of those who preach the truths which they have not committed to writing, and of which, however the substance may remain impressed by the Holy Spirit on the hearts of those who hear them, the records would otherwise be lost for ever to all others; and thus, not only would the labours of faithful ministers be restricted exclusively to their own congregations, but even these very congregations would be deprived of the privilege of recurring to instructions from which they have derived peculiar blessings to their souls.

By the humble exertions of the Editors of these volumes, not only are the valued labours of many beloved and zealous Ministers preserved to their own flocks, but, instead of being confined to the exclusive sphere of their own ministry, their invaluable testimony is diffused in the simplest, cheapest, most accessible and instructive form to others who are sunk in ignorance and error, and who are thus enabled to hear and read that word which is able to make them “wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” And they have this peculiar advantage, that *these sermons are never published without the revision of the Ministers who have preached them.*

Thus the Proprietors humbly trust they may be the favored instruments of sending faithful preaching through the land, and pouring into the ears and consciences of many of their fellow sinners the blessed balm of peace and everlasting salvation.

They finally hope they might confidently appeal to the judgment of

the Christian public from the very names of those whose sermons appear in their volumes, that they have published the discourses of men whose characters stand high in the estimation of the Church, as men of true piety and talents. And they commence the present year with two faithful Ministers of Christ, the RT. REV. DR. HOPKINS, BISHOP OF VERMONT, and the REV. HAMILTON VERSCHOYLE: the one, although a native of Ireland, labouring in a distant land ; the other in a no-less important field of exertion at home—both in the Lord's vineyard. But they would rather appeal to THE WORD OF GOD as the standard by which they trust their work will be judged and scrutinized, and to this standard they confidently do appeal, that they have published only those sermons which bear the stamp of Scriptural truth engraven on every line—the image and superscription of a crucified, risen, glorified, and coming Saviour.

It is on this they desire to rely—from this alone they seek the patronage and encouragement of all truly pious men ; for on this they look with humble confidence, and hope for the favor and blessing of their great and glorious God.

To Him they commit their work, and trust it will be accompanied by His blessing for this year, as they humbly hope it has been in those that are gone by.

THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

No. LXXIV.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5TH, 1839.

PRICE 3D.

RT. REV. J. H. HOPKINS.

REV. H. VERSCHOYLE.

THE ANGELIC HYMN ON THE NATIVITY.

A SERMON

PREACHED IN THE CHAPEL OF THE MAGDALEN ASYLUM, DUBLIN,

ON CHRISTMAS DAY, 1838,

BY THE RIGHT REV. JOHN H. HOPKINS, D.D.

Bishop of Vermont.

LUKE ii. 13, 14.

“ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men.”

THESE were the words, my brethren, of that sublime doxology with which the birth of the Saviour of the world was welcomed, by the congregation of angels. What more appropriate passage could be chosen for our theme, in addressing a congregation of Christians, on that festival which the Church, from the earliest ages, has set apart in solemn regard to the nativity of her Redeemer? Let me, then, ask your attention to a few plain remarks upon it, taking in their natural order the several topics which it presents to the reflecting mind. We shall promise you no stores of learning, no attractions of novelty, no display of ingenious argument, no force of eloquence or oratory; for these, the subject is too

familiar, and the preacher is too weak. May the God of truth, who is able to bless the humblest instrumentality, so direct us, that we may explain the revelation of his love with all simplicity—“not with the enticing words of man’s wisdom, but with the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power.”

The first topic which our text presents to us, is the statement that a multitude of the heavenly host praised God, saying, “Glory to God in the highest.” What was the cause of this angelic hymn of grateful adoration? The answer is contained in the annunciation just made to the shepherds of Judea,—“To you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord.” But how, it

may be asked, did this affect the *heavenly* host, and why should *they* unite in this chorus of acclaim, saying, "Glory to God in the highest?"

To understand this aright, we must remember that the character, the designs, and the actions of God, are the most important and interesting subjects to the whole universe. He is the Creator of heaven as well as earth, of angels as well as men. The thrones, the principalities and powers of the heavenly hierarchy are the work of his Almighty hand. In him, they all live, and move, and have their being. To what do they owe their felicity, but to his benevolence? On what do they rely for its continuance, but on his wisdom and his love? What security do they possess for their own bright heritage of glory, except that which is derived from the unchangeable perfection of their Creator's attributes? And therefore, how plain does it seem that every new manifestation of his goodness must affect them most sensibly, since on that goodness the safety and the happiness of themselves and of all creation must necessarily depend?

Now, the spectacle which drew from the angelic host the ascription of "Glory to God in the highest," was the most marvellous instance of divine compassion and love that they had ever known—yea, more marvellous than they could have conceived possible. They had seen our earth created pure and good, "when the morning stars had sung together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." They had seen the fair and beautiful Paradise which God had planted for the dwelling place of his favored creature, man. They had seen our first parents fall into transgression, sentenced to death, and expelled from their habitation. They had beheld the awful pestilence of iniquity spreading over the wretched posterity of Adam, until the sweeping destruction of the deluge was appointed to purify the world. The saving of

Noah in the ark, the repeopling of the earth, the recurrence of wickedness, the call of Abraham, the deliverance of the Israelites, their marvellous history, their rebellion, their punishment, their captivity, their return—all had passed before the eyes of the angels, because the Lord had employed them as his ministers to man, from the beginning; and they had been the sorrowful witnesses of his sins, his wretchedness, his subjection to the powers of darkness, his enmity against the will of his Creator and his God, until the weary round of forty centuries had passed over the history of a ruined world.

We may reverently conceive, that during all this time, the angels must have been often led to wonder what the end should be. They had indeed heard the promises of mercy, first, obscurely suggested in the assurance that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head; and afterwards more clearly revealed, as prophet after prophet made known the assurance of divine compassion to the children of mortality. And we cannot reasonably doubt that the angels understood, with considerable clearness, the *general purpose* of their glorious Sovereign, to bring redemption to mankind. But it may well be questioned whether they were minutely acquainted with the marvellous details of the system; since the Apostle Paul, even after the completion of the Redeemer's sacrifice, speaking of the wonders of the Gospel plan, saith, "*Which things the angels desire to look into.*" Hence, when the fulness of the time had come, and God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were lying exposed to its awful penalty, we may well suppose that the angels were struck with astonishment and admiration. Wonderful, of a truth, must that manifestation have been in the sight of the celestial host—God manifest in the flesh—the Creator united to the creature—the infinite Majesty of heaven linked with

the weakness of earth—the eternal and only begotten Son of the Most High, made one person with the infant offspring of the virgin mother. Oh, mystery of love! Miracle of mercy! worthy to inspire, not only the multitude of that heavenly host, but the boundless universe, with the utmost amazement, that pity and tenderness towards the ruined family of man could bring the King of kings and Lord of lords to such an act of surpassing humiliation.

But the angelic host did not close their hymn of praise by ascribing “Glory to God in the highest.” They proceeded to the gracious object of the incarnation of the Son of God, “on earth peace, good will towards men.” These expressions intimate clearly the condition in which the infinite love of Christ Jesus found mankind, and from which he desired to redeem them.

Man had abandoned the service of his Creator, and had become the servant of sin—led by him who is emphatically called Satan, or the enemy of God; and fallen, utterly fallen, from his original righteousness. By nature and by practice, the human heart was hostile to the Almighty, at war with his holiness, his justice, his purity, and his truth. These divine attributes were all arrayed against our rebel race, and the ingenuity of men and angels must alike have failed in the attempt to reconcile them. But although impossible to all others, the task was not impossible with God. Christ Jesus came to bring *peace*: and to effect this blessed purpose, three things were necessary, which claim our best consideration.

First, an atonement was required to the justice of the violated law, which should bear some just proportion to the awful amount of human guilt, and to the majesty of the Divine government. But what created being could render it? Could a mere man be accepted as a substitute for the countless myriads of the human family? Surely not; for

there could be no proportion between the temporal sufferings of one man, and the eternal punishment of millions. Could an angel or archangel be received to render satisfaction on the part of fallen humanity? By no means; and this for a double reason. On the one hand, the atonement offering must needs possess our nature; for none but man could be the representative of man. The original head of the human race was human, and the second Adam must be human too. On the other hand, the highest archangel possesses the same spiritual nature as the human soul; and one created spirit could in no way be an equivalent for a whole world of spirits. The atonement which our ruined condition required, therefore, demanded a union of characters which seemed impossible. The victim must be man; and yet possessed of majesty sufficient to be an equivalent for all the posterity of Adam: and who could render this peace-offering but Jesus Christ—God, the Son of the Almighty Father—man, the offspring of the virgin, united in one person—the Prince of Peace? Here was the majesty of the infinite God, giving all dignity to the sufferings of Christ's humanity, and presenting a Redeemer sufficient to atone, not only for a world, but for an universe.

But, secondly, the offering of the great atonement could only avail to satisfy the justice of God for sin. It could not abrogate the law, it could not do away the necessity of man's obedience. How was the sinner to have peace on the indispensable condition of righteousness? Who should stand for him in the judgment of that sacred Lawgiver who had said, “Curseth is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them?” Grant that the blessed Lamb of God appointed to take away the sin of the world, had redeemed him from destruction, where should he find the perfect conformity to the divine law which should account him

worthy of heaven? That law might remit the penalty of his transgressions again and again, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, but could never be said to be at peace with man until perfect obedience was yielded to its most just requirements; and alas! that perfect obedience, the sinner—fallen, weak, helpless, and totally incapable of himself to do any thing aright—could never render. Here, then, again, Christ Jesus became the gracious substitute of our ruined race, and as our head—the second Adam—worked out for us a perfect righteousness. In him, human nature possesses both the *peace* offering of atonement, and the *merit* of obedience; so that God may now be just, while he justifies the sinner.

Still, however, all was not done which the condition of poor humanity required. The penalty of sin might be remitted through the sacrifice of Christ, the admission to the kingdom of heaven might be secured through his perfect righteousness, but how was the sinful child of mortality to be made *fit—meet* for the inheritance of light? And what would it avail, at last, to gain the threshold of celestial joy, and then be thrust down, by reason of our unholiness, from the throne of God—the dwelling-place of glory? Grant, that his love was infinite—his desire to save us most absolute; he could not change his own divine nature in order to accommodate iniquity, nor could he destroy the happiness of heaven by suffering the abiding presence of what is unholy and impure. Nay, even if such a change in God were possible—which but to suppose is almost profanation; even if such a change in the character of heaven were possible—which is altogether absurd; it could avail men nothing: because a sinful being cannot be made happy, even by Omnipotence itself. The corrupt and depraved nature of man produces certain wretchedness on earth; how much more would this wretchedness

be of necessity increased, if such a nature became immortal? Were sin allowed in heaven, God would no longer be its sovereign—and heaven itself would be destroyed.

Here, then, is the third great requisite in the system of the Gospel. The sinner must be *changed*, changed in his very nature, created anew, made like unto God himself, and through this likeness, be qualified for the glory and the happiness of the life to come. And just as at the first creation, darkness covered the deep, until the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, so, in the new creation of the pardoned sinner, the same blessed Spirit descends upon the benighted soul, and brings the moral chaos out of darkness into light. To obtain for us this high and glorious privilege is again the blessed work of Christ the Lord. He is the Word, the revealer of wisdom and truth to man. He called his Church, and appointed its ministry and sacraments. But above all, he sends to us the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, by whom the faithful are sanctified, and made meet for the inheritance of immortal life and joy; and thus is perfected the work of *peace on earth*; that peace which truly passeth understanding—that peace which the world can neither give nor take away.

The concluding clause of our text, my brethren, will need but little illustration. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, *good-will towards men.*" Good-will, benevolence, or love, was indeed displayed in the incarnation of the Saviour to a degree beyond all comparison. "God *so* loved the world," saith the apostle, "that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Greater love than this hath no man," saith our Lord himself, "that he should lay down his life for his friends." And in the affecting language of the prophet, "When thy father and thy mother forsake thee, the Lord taketh

thee up. Can a mother forget her child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." Glory to God, that to us is born such a Saviour. "Glory to God in the highest! on earth peace, good-will towards men."

Can there be a heart which recoils from the angelic annunciation? Can there be a mind which seeks to cavil against the blessed message of redeeming love? Can there be a soul which chooses to cling to earth, to sin, to condemnation, rather than surrender itself to the glorious sovereignty of the Son of God? Oh, is there among you, my brethren, a single individual so infatuated as to feel no interest in the nativity of his Redeemer? Shall the multitude of the heavenly host rejoice in the mercy offered to man, and shall man himself despise and reject the inestimable blessing? God forbid! God forbid! Rather listen to the warning voice of his great forerunner, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." With earnest supplication beseech the gracious Saviour to have mercy upon you; and cease not until you can appropriate to yourself the kind and tender assurance of his own blessed word, "Son be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee."

But to us, my brethren in Christ, the return of this day should be indeed a festival of joy and gladness. To us that holy Child is born—to us that marvellous Son is given, on whose shoulder the government is laid—whose name is called "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." And is he so to us? Does he rule in our hearts without a rival? Does his blessed advent and wondrous character excite our adoring admiration? Is he the chosen Counsellor of every thought and action? Do we acknowledge him to be the Mighty God—one with the Everlasting Father? Oh, if it be thus of a truth, then will he be also to us the

PRINCE OF PEACE; peace with God—peace with men—peace in the empire of our stormy passions—peace in the heavenly purity of our desires—peace in the very pangs of death—peace in the paradise of the just made perfect—and peace in the high and holy refuge of his love, when the final day of the great account shall wrap the world in flames, and plunge the wretched hosts of his revilers into the abyss of horror and despair.

Yes, my brethren, he shall come again to judge the world which he has redeemed with his own precious blood. "Every eye shall see him, and they also that pierced him," and all those who have since pierced him afresh, by an unholy life and conversation. He shall come, not in the guise of the infant of Bethlehem, but in the glory of the Father. Oh, where shall be our place in that fearful day? Shall we stand on the right hand of the King of kings, clad in the spotless robe of his perfect righteousness, bearing aloft the palm of victory, and hearing addressed to us the gracious words, "*Come ye blessed children of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*" Or shall we be found on the left, overwhelmed with confusion and anguish; and be driven away by that dreadful sentence, "*Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire.*"

Beloved brethren, the time is short. Let us be sober and watch unto prayer. It is good that we should work out our salvation with holy "fear and trembling;" and it is also good that we work it out with sacred confidence, "for it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure." In that holy fear—in that sacred confidence—with true repentance, with lively faith, with steadfast hope, with fervent charity, with warm and grateful adoration—let us celebrate, this day, the surpassing love of our only Master and Saviour, in the blessed

eucharist of his own appointment. May we think of him not only as Christ "born in the city of David"—but as Christ, "formed in our hearts, the hope of glory"—and thus may we sympathise with the heavenly host, which hailed the precious day of his nativity—sympathise, did I say? Nay, brethren, that word is not appropriate. The angels had not fallen—they needed no Redeemer—it was not for them that the eternal Son of God became

an infant of days, and a man of sorrows, and at last bowed his sacred head upon the cross. With emotions, then, of far deeper intensity—with feelings of adoring gratitude beyond what even the angels could have known, should we utter the words of their celestial thanksgiving—
"GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST!
GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST! ON
EARTH, PEACE, GOOD-WILL TOWARDS
MEN."

A SERMON

PREACHED ON CHRISTMAS DAY, 1838, IN THE EPISCOPAL CHAPEL
UPPER BAGGOT-STREET, DUBLIN.

BY THE REV. HAMILTON VERSCHOYLE, A. M.

Chaplain.

ISAIAH, vii. 14.

“The Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

A PERIOD of four thousand years elapsed between the giving of the first promise to fallen man, and the performance of it when the Son of God was manifested in the flesh. Although all the hopes of a guilty world were suspended on that promise, it would have been buried in utter oblivion, if God had not again and again repeated it, and revived the recollection of it on sundry occasions. The passage before us furnishes an example where there is a striking reiteration of the promise made to Adam. We shall only refer to one other former occasion, when this promise was repeated, and especially, because the occasion on which the promise was then given, forms a striking contrast with the present. The case to which I refer, is in Genesis xxii. 16, 17, 18, where Abraham had pleased God by an act of signal obedience, which is the wonder of the world, where he “offered his only begotten son” at the command of God; and to reward him for this act of signal devotedness, God renews the ancient promise, “By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord; for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies: and in thy seed shall all the nations of the

earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.” Now, there the promise was repeated on the occasion of Abraham’s remarkable act of obedience. But how very different is the occasion on which it is repeated here. Ahaz was threatened with an invasion by the kings of Samaria and Syria; as befals ungodly men when they hear of any evil tidings, his heart failed him, as you read in verse 2, “His heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.” Nevertheless, the prophet Isaiah is sent to him with a promise of deliverance, at the same time requiring him implicitly to believe the word, verse 9, “If ye will not believe, surely you shall not be established.” And then, to confirm the promise, “the Lord spake again to Ahaz, saying, ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above.” But Ahaz, determining to abide in unbelief, refuses to ask the sign, under the pretext that it would be tempting God, (as if it would be tempting God to do what he commanded,) and answers, “I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord;” and then mark, at the moment of this act of disobedience, the Lord renews the ancient promise, for he says, “Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” So that you observe, when Abraham signally obeyed God, God repeated the old

promise of redemption through Christ, to which nothing could be added, for in it God declared that he would give all that he could give to the sons of men; and then again, on so signal an act of Ahaz's disobedience, God makes the same promise, without diminishing ought from it; for man's disobedience cannot disannul the grace and promise of God, because his mercy flows freely and richly out of "the good pleasure of his will," and is entirely irrespective of man's good or evil. But though the promise was the same, the individuals were in very different circumstances, for Abraham, through faith, received into his bosom all the riches of this covenant promise, whereas Ahaz came short of it through unbelief.

Now this promise was made, as you perceive, by reference to the chapter, as a pledge of the deliverance which God would vouchsafe them from the hands of the kings of Syria and Samaria. But how was it a pledge of this deliverance? How could it be a pledge to the house of Israel, that they would be delivered from this impending danger, to have the promise, that Messiah should come in the fullness of time? Dear brethren, it was a pledge on that broad principle which is contained in Romans viii. 32, and you will find that that principle is one which pervades the whole Scriptures. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things," as if the prophet had said to the men of Judah, God will give his own Son to deliver your souls from all spiritual enemies, much more will he give this temporal deliverance from the hands of the Syrians and Samaritans.

Look more narrowly into the promise itself, "Behold," your attention is called, God, as it were, points his finger at this, as something very extraordinary, and demanding all your devout attention. And may God the Holy Ghost prepare your heart to attend! May God quicken my soul and yours, that I may speak rightly,

faithfully, and lovingly, concerning this great salvation, and that you may hear with profit and edification, that sinners may be converted, and that the people of God may stand fast in Christ Jesus.

The promise is this, a son shall be born, but this son must not be born in the ordinary course of nature; if he had been thus born, he could not have been a Saviour, he must himself have been a sinner. When we search the Scriptures, we discover clearly that the corruption which was in our first parent, when he sinned, is transmitted to all his descendants in the ordinary course of generation. In Genesis v. 3, it is thus written, "Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image." Here Adam's corruption was transmitted to his son Seth; and then look at verse 6, you read again, that "Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos." Now, it is not there expressly said, that Seth begat Enos in his own image, that he transmitted original corruption to him, but it is implied, and so to be understood by those who read the passage. And then, that we may not delay you by tracing down the generations of men from Enos to Abraham, let us come to Abraham; look at St. Matthew i. "Abraham begat Isaac." It is not expressly said that Abraham begat Isaac in his own image, but it is implied. The corruption of man's original sin was transmitted from Enos to Abraham, and from Abraham to his son Isaac. Look again, at verse 16, "And Jacob begat Joseph," (we are coming down to the birth of the holy child Jesus,) it is not indeed, there said, that Jacob begat Joseph in his own image, but this is to be understood. Then mark what follows, if it were said that Joseph begat Jesus, he would have been a sinner and no Saviour, but the current of corruption is broken off, the taint of the blood is arrested, for it is said, "Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus,

who is called Christ." Here, I say, the bitter stream is cut off, and here the fountain of pure water, the river of the water of life, clear as crystal, springs up to give life to the nations; here, out of a dry branch of a dry tree, springs forth the branch of renown, whose fruit is for food, and whose leaves are for healing; here, in the midst of darkness, through the tender mercies of our God, the day spring from on high visits us, and Jesus, the virgin's son, conceived by the Holy Ghost, shines forth in the midst of a dark world, and grows up as a root out of a dry ground in the midst of this wilderness; and thus, the promise of God in our text was fulfilled, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son."

It is evident, therefore, dear friends, that the passage in Psalm li. 5, does not apply to Christ, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." This I mention, because some, without sufficient consideration, adopt a theory, and are tempted in support of it, to wrest the Scriptures from their true application. Some persuade themselves that every verse of the psalms, where the psalmist speaks of himself, expressly relates to Christ. Now, that theory falls to the ground, when you compare the verse I have quoted with what has been said concerning the generation of Jesus Christ.

Here then, we have a perfect man—a sinless, spotless man—a man indeed, because made of the substance of a woman, "Bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh," but yet a sinless, spotless man, because conceived, not according to the ordinary course of nature, but by the Holy Ghost, so that the infinite holiness of the Holy Ghost encircled the infant Jesus around, and kept original sin at an infinite and eternal distance.

Let us endeavour to set clearly before our eyes the necessity for this perfect man Jesus, the holy child Jesus, the spotless Son of God. I think it will help us to form an adequate conception of this, by

considering what he came to accomplish. It was to make reconciliation for the sins of the guilty, to make an end of sin, and to bring in everlasting righteousness. Now, under the law, in the sin-offering which God ordained to be offered, there were three things to be regarded; first, *the victim* to be offered; secondly, *the offerer*; and thirdly, *the place* where it was to be presented.

If you consider the thing which, the person by whom, and the place where, as regarded the legal offering, you will see at once the weakness and inadequacy of the law for the salvation of man, as well as the suitableness of the child Jesus.

First, *With respect to the thing which*, the victim—the appointment was, that it should be without blemish; but what a multitude of questions would naturally arise as to what degree of blemish would constitute the victim unfit for the purpose. In Malachi i. 8, God reproves the people for offering unfit sacrifices, "If ye offer the blind for sacrifices, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil?" Now, I put it to your understandings, was there not an open door for uncertainty here? What degree of blindness, sickness, lameness, would make the victim unfit to be offered?

Again, suppose the victim to be perfectly blemishless, and this fully established; consider secondly, *by whom this victim was to be offered*; by a priest that had similar infirmity, such as Aaron had, who was easily turned away from the service of God, and offered sacrifice to devils in Horeb. Suppose the victim to be a perfect one, here was another indication of weakness; the priest was imperfect, and consequently, there was something defective in his service. But suppose the priest, as well as the victim, were perfect, another difficulty remained as regarded *the place where*. Now, this was in the tabernacle while it stood, or afterwards in the temple. But with respect to these places, although they were comparatively holy, yet they were

not *absolutely* holy; for you find in Leviticus xvi 16, that the priest was there to make atonement for the pollution of the tabernacle, because it stood in the midst of a polluted people, and was polluted by their sins. First, it was built by the hands of a polluted people, and every work of man's hands is unclean; and as the tabernacle abode among a polluted people, it was polluted, and contracted defilement. If the victim and the priest were perfect, yet the tabernacle was polluted and imperfect, and consequently, unfit as a place where effectual sacrifices might be offered.

Now, my dear brethren, see how Christ meets every demand, see how there is an all-sufficiency in him, and how there is strength in him in contrast with the weakness of the law; for first, consider him as a victim, he was absolutely perfect, without spot from his birth, without taint of original or actual sin. Oh, there can be no question, sinner, whoever thou art, that desirest to disburden thy heavy laden soul, there can be no question in laying this hand on the head, the dear head of the Lord Jesus, he is the spotless victim, without question approved by God and man. Again, he is the spotless high priest, "the word of the oath maketh the Son a high priest, who is consecrated for evermore," "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners;" so that not only is the victim perfect, but the high priest is absolutely and eternally perfect, and altogether sufficient to perform such a service, and to offer an acceptable sacrifice to God.

But, besides this, the place in which the offering was offered up, is most holy; for Christ's body is the tabernacle, the temple, in which the priest offered the victim. He himself is the priest, the victim, the tabernacle; and you will observe that these three things are brought together in one passage by St. Paul, Hebrews ix. 11, 12, "Christ being made an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle," (his own body, not tainted by corruption

of birth or practice,) "not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood; he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." You see, then, that there was a necessity that there should be a perfect man, that he might be a perfect victim, a perfect priest, a perfect tabernacle or temple—and Jesus is that man, and no other.

And now, what is his name? for we must have something more than man for this work of everlasting redemption. What is his name? "His name shall be called Immanuel," his name was called Jesus, why? because his name was Immanuel; for, if he were not Immanuel, God with us, he could not be Jesus the Saviour; man alone, though never so perfect, never could save; the Saviour must be God and man.

But you will ask, was not God with the fathers? Was he not with the church of old—the church of Israel? Yes, truly he was, but yet he was there in figure, he was there in shadows and representations. The difference now is this, that in the person of him who was born of a virgin, dwelt "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Under the law, there was a figurative representation of God, but here we have the real presence of God in the man Christ Jesus. For what could the victims under the law do for the removal of sin? Its life was no equivalent for the life of man: you might as well think to discharge a debt of a talent of gold, by a talent of lead, as think of discharging men's sins by the blood of bulls and of goats, "it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins." But when we consider that our victim is Immanuel, that all the fulness of the Godhead bodily dwelt in the Lamb of God, then we see there is a full equivalent. It was said of David, by his faithful people, 2 Samuel xviii. 3, "Thou art worth ten thousand of us," and may we not say of Immanuel, thou art worth ten

thousand thousand of us. When we see Jesus die, we see death abolished, our sin blotted out for ever, and eternal redemption obtained for us.

And then again, as a priest, all the fulness of the Godhead bodily dwelt in him, which stamped his services with infinite value, especially when he offered himself. Here was God for a victim, and God for an offerer, and nothing less than God will make satisfaction for man's transgressions.

And more than this, Jesus was our tabernacle, "in him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," as the shekinah dwelt in the tabernacle of old, Christ offered himself in the tabernacle of his own body, out of which the Divine presence will not remove, through the countless ages of eternity, so that a place gives a value to a service. Oh, what a glorious assurance is here for the sinner that repents and receives Jesus, that, "though his sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." He has abolished death, he brings life and immortality to light, through the Gospel, he brings the sinner near to God, he opens a wide door, he says, "behold I am the tabernacle, enter in here and abide for ever." And is this tabernacle without a priest? He says, "I am the great High Priest of thy profession, dwell with me in the secret of my tabernacle for ever." And is this tabernacle and priest without an offering? "I also am the Lamb for a burnt offering."

Now, dear friends, what shall we say to these things? Jesus Immanuel is in the midst of us, God and man, one Christ, is here before us, with open arms to embrace us, to save us from all our sins, to sanctify us, to make us like himself, and receive us to glory.

I will tell you a story that was related by one of our holy reformers, who afterwards suffered at the stake.

He was preaching a sermon on the nativity of our blessed Lord. (It is

merely a fable, but still the moral of it is very instructive, I felt it when I read it, bringing conviction to my soul, and I hope it will to yours.) The devil once came into a church, where there was a large congregation, and he heard the minister repeating these words of the creed, "who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Ghost, by the virgin Mary, and was made man, also for us." And he looked about him to see whether any was greatly moved, whether any eyes were filling with tears of gratitude, whether any man cast himself down on his knees to give thanks;—and when he found no man was much affected, he turned and said to one beside him, 'oh, if we devils were to hear that the Son of God had taken our nature, we would have more gratitude than you, sons of men, have.'

Take care, lest the devil be your accuser this day, of ingratitude to the incarnate Saviour. My dear friends, there is great danger of this. Alas, how many hearts are like the crowded inn of Bethlehem, having no room to admit the Saviour. Look into your hearts, and see what they have been filled with to-day! Have your thoughts been set on the festivities and amusements which are usual at such a season as this? Oh, has there been nothing in your soul but the bustle and confusion of the world, and worldly pleasures, and carefulness about entertaining your friends, and such things? Oh, that the Lord may suddenly come to the temple of our hearts, and drive out the multitude of intruders, till at last, he is left alone in the temple. Oh that Jesus may be daily driving out worldly lusts, worldly cares, worldly desires, worldly affections, that Christ may dwell alone in our hearts by faith, that it may be written on the heart of every one of us—the Lord is here.

Dear brethren, I must speak a word in conclusion to those who do embrace him by faith. Let me remind you, how the

faithful people of God in the days of unbelieving Abaz, embraced the tidings and rejoiced in this great salvation ; for it was a time of trouble with the church in those days, as we see in the next chapter, (viii. 7.) that great troubles were coming on the church, “ therefore, behold the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory, and he shall come over all his channels, and go over all his banks : and he shall pass through Judah, he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck ; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.” The church of God always has her head above water, the waters may come up to the neck but they will never drown her. So the church is in deep waters, in trouble, and distress, and perplexity and temptation, but what sustains her ? Listen to her triumphant challenge of her enemies in verse 9, “ Associate yourselves O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces ; and give ear all ye of the countries, gird yourselves and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take council together, and it shall come to naught, speak the word, and it shall not stand,” why ? “ for God is with us.” She takes hold of the name Immanuel. Oh take hold of Him, let every heart take hold of that name to-day, and dwell upon it. The Gospel is in that name, the riches of divine grace is in that name, the treasures of God are in that name, “ Immanuel, God is with us !”

Let me speak then to the troubled soul, “ when thou goest through the waters, He will be with thee ; and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee,” I am thy Immanuel, thy Jesus, the waters may come up to thy neck when thou passest through the river, but they shall not overflow thee, yea, more than this, “ when thou passest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned,” and why ? because God is with thee.

But besides the trials and temptations thou hast to encounter, thou hast duties to perform. Will God be with you in these duties ? Yes, he will, he will be with you, he is Immanuel still. When he went up to heaven, at his ascension, it is written, that when the Apostles went forth to preach the word, “ God worked with them,” Jesus was with them still. Well then, he is with you in every duty, if you set your hearts to serve him, he will not forsake you, his strength will not be wanting to you : if you desire to be devoted to Jesus, to such a high priest who gave himself for you—if your heart is intent on this, you will have grace sufficient, for Jesus is Immanuel, God with you ; in every act of service, in every trial and temptation, God with you ; in every conflict he maketh you “ more than conquerors through him that loved you ;” “ therefore, my dearly beloved, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord ; forasmuch as ye know, that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.”

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THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“We preach Christ crucified—

“Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

No. LXXV.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19TH, 1839.

PRICE 3D.

“A PLEA FOR THE POORER BRETHREN.”

A SERMON

PREACHED IN ST. MARY'S CHURCH, DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30TH, 1838,

ON BEHALF OF THE

“ASSOCIATION FOR THE RELIEF OF DISTRESSED PROTESTANTS,”

BY THE REV. FIELDING OULD, A.B.

Incumbent of Christ Church, Liverpool.

2 Cor. viii. 23, 24.

“Or our brethren be enquired of, they are the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ. Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf.”

It is not without many misgivings, brethren, nor much anxiety, that I ascend the pulpit for the discharge of the preacher's office this day. And I can truly say, without the faintest affectation of humility, that “I am with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling.” When I think of the *occasion* on which we are now assembled, and of the *cause* that solicits our attention; when I think of the illustrious *names* which have preceded me in its advocacy, and feel my own *unworthiness* to wear their mantles; when I reflect on the important *interests* that are at stake, and consider into *whose hands* they have been intrusted,—I do confess that I am overcome with feelings of unfeigned embarrassment, and constrained to throw myself on your indulgence, while I earnestly entreat the assistance of

your prayers. And yet, when I received, across the waters, the invitation to lift up my feeble voice on this behalf, though for many reasons unwilling to consent, I could not bring my purpose to refuse. “An association for the relief of Distressed Protestants” had, almost in its every word, an irresistible appeal to the tenderest emotions of my heart; and when summoned to do for it what the Lord might enable my limited ability to accomplish, I struggled against every feeling of diffident repugnance, and resolved once more to re-visit my native shores on an errand as interesting as ever caused involuntary exile to seek again the land of his fathers!

The peculiar character and complexion of the times in which we live, imparts to this charity a degree of interest which it

would not, under other circumstances, possess. The principle of genuine charity is too expansive to be ordinarily confined and limited within the bounds of party or religious denomination. The eye of charity, like that of its Inspirer and its Lord, as it traverses the fields of human misery, is not "partial" in its choice of the recipients of its bounty, nor a "respector of persons" in the distribution of its alms. Whether the cry of distress is borne to its ear from the poor wounded traveller on the highway to Jericho, from the Centurion grieving for his diseased servant, or from the woman of Canaan, mourning over her "grievously vexed" daughter—its heart of *kindness* is ever warm with sympathy, its hand of *power* is ever open with relief. That, then, which, in a different state of things, would operate, not unjustly, as an objection to the principle of this Association, is just the consideration which makes it, as matters now are, appeal with irresistible force to the hearts of all who know what true charity implies. For, on whose behalf is the appeal of this day? On behalf of *OUR POOR PROTESTANT BRETHREN*. And if we live in a day when to be a *Protestant* is to be deemed worthy of slight and discouragement, and to be a *poor Protestant* is a sure passport to "liberal" contumely and "enlightened" neglect, then do I consider it the bounden duty of those who love and glory in the name, to supply "the lack of service" of those official philosophers, whose own Protestantism being but of *base coin*, has but slender affinity with that of *genuine metal*. It would seem, I say, your bounden duty, notwithstanding the taunts against your one-eyed charity, to rally round those who are special sufferers for principle at the present day, and at least to take care that they starve not, for want of "the bread that perisheth," nor thirst, unrefreshed, for the waters of everlasting life.

The chapter from which the words of our text are taken, contains the Apostle's appeal to the Christians at Corinth for the relief of the necessities of the poor saints in Jerusalem, and throughout Judea, who were, at that time, suffering under the combined miseries of war, famine and persecution. Although Paul was specially the Apostle of the Gentiles, and was now addressing a Gentile church, he had still a tender regard for those among the Jews who were converted to the Christian faith; and although the happiest feelings did not always subsist between

the Jewish and Gentile converts, the Apostle puts forth all his energies to press on the Gentile believers the imperative duty of assisting those who were *brethren in Christ*, without reference to any circumstances that might be calculated to create disunion, or interrupt their christian brotherhood.

Now, I desire to borrow from this portion of Scripture, an illustration of those two principal points to which the subject of this day's appeal directs our attention, viz. *the character of those for whom we plead, and the duty of those with whom we plead*. And may the gracious Lord vouchsafe to us the assistance of his Holy Spirit, in order that the word of truth may be preached and heard to godly edifying, and that an abundant measure of success may crown the cause whose interests we are assembled to promote, for our blessed Saviour's sake!

I. THE CHARACTER OF THOSE FOR WHOM WE PLEAD. What, then, is the character of the clients for whom I plead this day? They may be described as

1. "*Our brethren*." "If our brethren, be, &c." It was the surly reply of the first murderer to the righteous inquiry of the "Avenger of blood," "Am I my brother's keeper?" It is in a spirit too similar to this, that many a Cain in our own day, answers the touching appeal on behalf of a brother's necessities and a brother's wrongs. But what says our blessed Lord himself, by his beloved disciple, to the church? "Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" 1 John iii. 17. This was not the way in which *He* acted towards us. He was possessed of all the treasures of heaven, for "the Father had given all things into his hands;" he saw our need, that it was a deep and awful necessity, a depth of misery and danger that no created intelligence could fathom, undestroyed; and He "shut not up his bowels of compassion" from us. No! He opened them wide as the circumference of the human family, and embraced within their gracious membranes the whole race of the fallen. For, the love of the Father, and the love of souls, resided in his bosom, and became the pinions on which he flew from heaven to earth, to be the great instrument of salvation to the lost, and of life to the dead! And when he had finished his work, and burst the cerements of the tomb, and come

forth on the third morning's dawn from the astonished grave, in what affecting language does he describe the close and intimate relation subsisting between Him and his dear people!

Oh, it was astonishing condescension, when the Redeemer of mankind addressed his disciples as his *servants*. "the *servant* is not greater than his Lord;" when he saluted them as his *friends*, "ye are my *friends*, if ye do whatsoever I command you;" but, oh, how infinite the condescension which called them *brethren*! which said, on the day when he had become "the resurrection and the life," "Go to my *brethren*, and say unto them, that I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." (John xx. 17.) The Lord Jesus Christ became our "brother" by his assumption of our nature and by his suffering in that nature as the propitiation for our sins. We become "his brethren" by faith in his sacrifice, and love to his redeemed. It is impossible to love the great *Brother* of Jehovah's family without loving the *brethren* of the household; and accordingly he hath constituted a sympathy with their sorrows, and a relief of their distresses, a test or criterion of true affection for Himself, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me."—(Matt. xxv. 35. 36.) On this rule will proceed the process of the last great assize. We desire then, that you would recognise *brethren* in those for whom we are anxious to excite your sympathies this day. We beseech you to look through the veil which separates you—the rich from the poor—and behold through that thin transparency, the lineaments and features of those who are "bone of your bone, and flesh of your flesh," fellow-citizens, fellow-subjects, and, we trust, in many instances, fellow-heirs of the grace of life. Let their *Protestantism* be permitted to establish this relationship, and let not their *poverty* be allowed to silence the voice of its claims. Should any demon of discord ever seek to kindle the flame of jealous separation between you,—imagine that you hear the touching appeal of the man of God borne to your ears on the wings of the Spirit, "Sirs, ye are brethren." Acts vii. 26. Should any arch enemy of our Protestant institutions, acting on the ancient policy,

"Divide and govern," seek to estrange your affections from those who have proved themselves your best friends, whether they be in high station, or whether they be in the ranks of the poor,—should any such enemy strive to induce you to look with cold indifference upon the success of such an appeal as this, tell him that this appeal is for *BRETHREN*,—"brethren dearly beloved and longed for," and cannot therefore be otherwise regarded than with an interest the liveliest and most intense; and that, while *Poper*y can afford her £15,000 a year in sympathy with those who are bound up with the glory of her cause, *Protestantism* may well afford as many hundreds, as the expression of her regard for those who are, under God, the basis of her greatness, and the sinew of her strength.

2.—But, secondly, *they are "the messengers of the Churches."* The Christians to whom these words originally applied, were employed, as appears from the context, and parallel passages, (see Phil. ii. 25,) in visits of sympathy and condolence, to various members of the general body, who were suffering from the violence of Jewish or Pagan persecution. They were thus "messengers" appointed to convey to the more distant brethren, the expression of their fellow believers' compassion for their sorrows, as well as to impart substantial manifestations of their readiness to relieve and diminish what they could not altogether remove. Being poor themselves, these "messengers" had nothing to excite the cupidity, or provoke the jealousy of those who lay in wait to plunder and oppress God's heritage; and so they were enabled to move abroad upon their charitable excursions, approving themselves, wheresoever they journeyed, a refreshment to the souls, and a rejoicing to the hearts, of their separated brethren.

Nor is this title altogether inapplicable to those poor brethren in whose behalf I am solicitous to fire your sympathies this day. Frequently compelled by the depreciation of particular branches of trade, and by want of employment, to change their local situation, I ask, is it not eminently desirable that they should be prepared in the use of such judicious means as this Association employs, to be practical evangelists in their devious wanderings, so as to leaven the population throughout the range of their itinerancy, with the principles of our holy religion? It is notorious, that a large proportion of

the poor Protestants of this country, visit and pass through the metropolis, sometimes remaining here in hope of employment, sometimes making occasional excursions to England, with a similar object in view, and sometimes, alas! on their way to the American continent, banished by a cruel and much deplored necessity, from the land of their birth and their affections!

Here, then, in the capital, is situated the fountain head of Protestant poverty and wretchedness, from whence the streams return in many a winding, through the provinces, spreading sadness and desolation in their course. From hence, as from the broken heart of Ireland, the various veins and arteries are continually pouring along their tide of wretchedness, backwards and forwards, from the centre to the extremities of the land.

How important, then, is it, how necessary, how indispensable, that Christian benevolence should make an effort to assuage the severity of this deluge of troubled waters, and either dry up its bubbling well-spring, or purify the contents of its discharge? Look to it, I beseech you, that your brethren, if *stationary* among you, be at least decently clothed, fed and lodged, or at all events rescued from the cellar and garret of starvation, the prey of misery, the victims of disease;—and if *itinerant*, see that they carry with them a boon to bestow, far richer than that they receive; see to it, that while they beg the “bread that perisheth,” they may be able to give in return for it the “bread that endureth to everlasting life, and that, if they must travel, like “the tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,” they approve themselves “the messengers of the churches,” that they may be “the glory of Christ.”

How many of our poor Protestant brethren, in this dark and evil day, are reduced to their present condition of poverty and suffering, through the severe pressure of Papal persecution? Yes! they have had the misfortune, somehow, to offend that tyrant power that never *forgets* nor *forgives* an insult,—it may be by the steadiness of their adherence to their protesting creed, or by their consistent perseverance in refusing to identify themselves with the anti-christian machinery around them. They are *marked*—they are *watched*—they are *denounced*—they are *cursed*—in one word, they are *PERSECUTED*; and if they would not brave

the blow of the highway murderer, or the fire-brand of the midnight incendiary, they must fly from the country, and often find themselves but half safe in the metropolis; while they are frequently obliged to cross the seas, as if nothing but “a great gulf fixed” could effectually screen them from the rage of the “harlot drunk with the blood of the saints”! Yes, even in England, I have myself known the poor Irish Protestant emigrant pursued by the ruthless malignity of Popish hate! As it is possible to have a martyr's *spirit* without a martyr's *sufferings*; so is it possible to have a martyr's *sufferings* without a martyr's *spirit*. Are there any who would say, that these defenceless ones should stand their ground, and be prepared to meet the death for their principles which the adversary threatens to inflict? If there be, I would only say, that it is easy for those who are not themselves thus exposed to the peril, to argue on abstract principles, however just, on the duties and behavements of those who are actually within reach of the fangs of the serpent, and within audience of the lion's roar. Though our poor brother be “weak in the faith,” this is surely no reason why we should refuse to “receive him;” though he have not a spirit worthy to rank him amongst the devoted soldiers of the Christian martyrology, it is no reason why he should be left to perish in silent misery, rotting away his existence upon a handful of damp straw, unconsoled by the prayer of Christian faith, uncheered by the hope of being hereafter “comforted,” as he is now “tormented.” In order to show that this is not an over-drawn picture of our poor brethren's present condition, let me read for you a short extract from the last published Report of the Association.

“The experience which perhaps every individual member of the committee has had as a visitor, enables the Committee here to state, in a manner the most unqualified, that no description, however vivid, that nothing, in fact, but actual acquaintance with the cases, can give an adequate idea of the extremely deplorable state of wretchedness, to which a large number of our poor Protestant brethren are reduced. It is a matter of quite ordinary occurrence to meet with *family after family without bed or bedding, without chair, table, or any one article of furniture; without any provision to meet the necessary wants of the day, and divested of all articles of raiment*

except such tattered rags as are insufficient for the purposes of decency, to say nothing of warmth and comfort. The inmates of wretched abodes have been found stretched together upon the fragments of what was once an armful of straw, reduced by long continued use to something like chaff and dust. In those cases some one individual has been kept in such a state, as to be able to go out, in order to make the endeavour to discover some precarious provision for the rest. Incredible as it may seem, such cases have not been uncommon, and this destitution has existed when the committee have not been able to fasten any improper conduct on the victims of it, when the only discernable causes seem to have been inevitable misfortune, taken in connexion with sickness and an utter inability to procure employment; under such circumstances, article after article has been sent to the pawn office, until at length, the results above mentioned have been produced.”—(Report, page 10.)

Is this the true state of the case? Let us then, by all means exert ourselves, even at some personal sacrifice, to procure for our suffering brethren those common necessities, without which, existence itself is but a sad and intolerable burden; remembering, that every pains are taken to nourish them for *eternity* as well as for *time*, not only to remove a few thorns from the pathway of life, but to strew with roses and lilies—with the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valley—the path that leads to a blessed immortality, that they may not only be *examples* of the church’s liberality, but “*messengers*” of her pious beneficence through the length and breadth of the land.

3.—*They are, further, the “glory of Christ.”* In what, my brethren, may we suppose, does the especial glory of our blessed Lord consist? Is it, think ye, in the height of his exaltation, the homage of angelic worshippers, the songs and hallelujahs of an adoring heaven? No! the *grace* of the Lord is the *glory* of the Lord; and “ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye, through his poverty might be rich.” 2 Cor. viii. 9. “I beseech thee,” said Moses to the Lord Jehovah, “show me thy glory?” And what was the answer to the sublime prayer? “I will make all my *goodness* pass before thee;” (Exodus, xxxiii. 18, 19,) because the *goodness* of the Lord was the *glory* of the

Lord. Yes! our Immanuel glories more in his *crown of thorns* than in his *crown of gold*, in his *cross of agony* than in his *throne of triumph*, in the prayers, and tears, and sighs, of penitent transgressors, than in the acclamations and hosannahs of archangel choirs. He is more glorified in the love of the *saints*, than in the adoration of the *seraphim*—has more honor from the tear-dewed anointing of Magdalene, than from the loftiest salutations of Gabriel himself! It is not difficult then, to ascertain the sense in which this expression applies to the objects of our present solicitude. Are they *poor*? The Saviour has himself dignified the condition of human poverty, by having become, not only a *man*, but a *poor man*, and by having purposely surrounded himself, during the season of his humiliation, not with the rich and the noble, the vain-glorious Herods, or the pompous Cæsars; but with the obscure and the despised—the fishermen of Galilee, and the publicans of Gennesareth. When asked to give evidence to the disciples of the Baptist that his mission was divine, did he not declare as the most convincing demonstration that “to the poor the gospel was preached?” Yes, beloved friends, the pious poor are “the glory of Christ,” more than the rich with all their splendour, even when grace gives fresh dignity to their ermine, and adds new lustre to their coronets and crowns. With the pious poor, Jesus, in a special manner, delights to sympathize; to *them*, he, in a special manner, manifests himself; from *them*, he derives special revenues of glory. He is honored in their *patience*, exalted in their un murmuring *resignation* to his afflictive dispensations, glorified in their confiding *trust* in him “when the fig-tree does not blossom, and there is no fruit in the vine.” Hab. iii. 17. He goes with them to their dark abodes of suffering and privation, to dry the starting tear, to silence the bursting murmur, to bind up the bleeding heart. He presides in their solemn assemblies, when gathered in his name in the lofty gallery or along the crowded aisle, that he may break for them the bread of life from the lips of the preacher, and cause the tidings of his dying love to ring their melodious peal through the gladdened recesses of their souls. He visits them in their seasons of distressful emergency, in the persons of his dear ministers and servants, and turns the cup of cold water, which they present in his name, into a draught of refreshing

wine for the sustainment of their souls. And when they come to die, how gently does he lead them through the dark and dreary valley—how softly close the glazed eye, and still the hurried pulse, and whisper within, those inexpressible consolations which bow the very heavens, and anticipate its joys, and cause the poor believer to feel himself, even before he has become “absent from the body,” to be already “present with the Lord!”

And if our dear Redeemer thus regards his people when they are *poor*, how does he feel for them and towards them when they are *persecuted* too? If he esteems them “his glory,” when deprived in his providence of needful provision for the body, how does he look upon them when in the furnace of affliction, and played around by the fires of the enemy and oppressor! If Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were “the glory” of the Lord merely as captive exiles in Babylon, how much more did they glorify him in the light of Nebucadnezzar’s fire? It cannot be denied, that our poor Protestant brethren are, and have been, for years, undergoing a fierce and unrelenting persecution in this country. Their religious zeal has been termed *bigotry*—their devoted loyalty stigmatized as *political partizanship*, their assertion of Protestant principle and exhibition of Protestant practice construed into a studied insult to the favored disciples of the “man of sin.” The public grants have been withdrawn from the schools in which their children received a Scriptural education, in order that the stream of Treasury favor might flow into the capacious reservoirs of Maynooth and “the Board;”—and while the Churches are in many places tumbling to the ground for want of repairs, and in many others affording insufficient accommodation, especially for the poor,—*thousands of pounds* have been either granted or lent by the Board of Public Works for the erection or enlargement of the Mass houses of the Papacy.*

And not to speak of the studious oversight of Protestants in the appointments to official situations in the various departments of the public service, and of the equally studious preferment of men whose only claim to that preferment was their treason to the Protestantism which they professed and betrayed; I say, not to speak of these things, the notoriously unprotected state of Protestant life and property in many districts of the country,

amounts to a sufficient demonstration that the clients whose cause I advocate this day, are, and have been, to all intents and purposes, for some time past, a *persecuted body*. There are some among them who are even now beginning to echo the cry, “How long, O Lord, how long?” And we do trust that the time is not far distant, when a favourable change will ensue, and the dawn of a happier day will gild the horizon of our land. But meanwhile, it is needful that those who are “the glory of Christ” should be borne upon the hearts of their Christian brethren, and affectionately plied with that Christian instruction which will furnish the most effectual discipline against the troublous times—the storms and tempests that will most probably precede the return of tranquil days. And while it is most painful to contemplate any of our brethren in a pure profession, as the captives of the devil and the slaves of sin, ignorant of their own principles, unimbued with the sacred and holy character of the truths revealed in the Bible, which it is their privilege to search, and exhibiting themselves in their ignorance, their drunkenness, their vicious dissipation, rather as the *shame* and *reproach* of Christ than as “*his glory*,” while it is painful to contemplate this state of things, it is on the other hand, delightful to know, that when prayerful students of his Bible, regular frequenters of his sanctuary, holy reverers of his name and his day, “abhorring all that is evil, and cleaving to all that is good,” they shall be found safe in “the evil day;” and when the overflowing scourge shall come, the banner over them shall be *love*, the rampart around them shall be *omnipotence*, and the glory of the Lord shall be their *reward*! As the glory of their Lord was the chief desire of their souls, so will they have become “the glory of Christ,” when he comes to “see of the travail of his soul,” to “make his enemies his footstool,” and “to be admired in all them that believe!”

Having now laid before you the character of those for whom I plead to-day, I next proceed to consider

II. THE DUTY OF THOSE WITH WHOM WE PLEAD.—“Wherefore show ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love and of our boasting on your behalf.”

1. *The first duty is, then, to give proof of your professed love to the brethren.* When our Lord Jesus Christ was asked

* See Note, No. 1.

upon a certain occasion, "what was the first and great commandment of the law?" He answered thus, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength: and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." I ask you, beloved friends, do you profess to love God? Would any of you be offended, if we were to say, that you do not love Him? But, says the apostle, (1 John iv. 20) "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother,"—what is he?—"he is a liar!" That is, it is impossible that love towards God can reside in your bosoms, if you do not love your neighbour also; and as "he who is not with the Lord is against him," so he that *practically* loves not his brother *practically* hates him.—Selfishness is the bane and curse of our corrupted nature; the man who wraps himself close in the mantle of self-love, and regards not the sorrow that comes willing from the heart of a brother in adversity, though he may have it in his power, by a very slight sacrifice, to dry up the fountain of his sorrows, or at least to assuage their bitterness,—such a man cannot have the love of God in him. If he love not the *members* whom he does see, how can he love the *head* which he does not see? Nay, more, he cannot be a *Christian*, however loudly he may profess,—*the man that loves not his brother cannot be a child of God.* So the Lord tells us by his apostle John, as you may perceive, upon reference to 1 John iii. 14, where we thus read, "we know, that we have passed *from death unto life* because we love the brethren; he that loveth not his brother *abideth in death.*" Christ has given us a standard of morals, a standard of feelings, a standard of principles, a standard of action; and we are not entitled to call ourselves by the name of *Christians*, unless we endeavour to arrive at that standard.

Now, beloved friends, let me refer you to a few specific instances of the miserable condition of those for whom I plead, and to these details I have especially to request your patient attention. The following extract from the last published Report of the Association to which I have already alluded, will set before you a general view of the condition of our poor brethren;—

"They are intimately mixed up with the Roman Catholic population; you will find one or two poor Protestants living in a lodging room with six or seven Roman

Catholics; again, you will find a single room tenanted by a poor Protestant family in a large house where all the other inmates are of the adverse faith. A very moderate acquaintance with scriptural truth, and the formation of habits, will suffice to show, what an injurious effect this state of things must have on the religious character of our poor; they are constantly brow-beaten and insulted as heretics, their ears are habituated to profaneness and blasphemy, they are compelled to witness drunken broils and fightings. Under these circumstances how great are the hindrances to prayer, meditation, and the study of God's word? hindrances, which alas, are often but too successful in separating the poor Protestant from his God and Saviour; thus he becomes an easy prey to the tempter, loses all courage in the maintenance of his principles, and is in a degree assimilated as to moral practice, with those whose principles he professedly renounces. *In a word, he imbibes habits of conduct which are calculated to degrade and impoverish, he neglects his place of worship, disregards private and family religion, and loses every thing of Protestantism, but the name.* Indeed cases have come to the knowledge of the Committee, in which under the influences just described, even the name has been ordinarily renounced."—(Report, p. 11.)

What an affecting case is the following:—"A poor woman E. B., with an infant child, had been deserted by her husband. Previously to her marriage she had lived in good places, with credit to herself. But when her confinement drew nigh she was obliged to relinquish service. When she came out of the Lying-in-Hospital with her baby, she could get no situation. By degrees every article of clothing was disposed of, and, as her destitution made progress, she became less and less likely to be employed. *At length she was turned out of her lodgings because unable to pay the rent, and was obliged to pass her nights generally in watch houses, or on landing-places.* Her character having been found blameless, the Committee entrusted £1 for her benefit, to a benevolent lady, who was acquainted with and took an interest in her case. By these means she was provided with clothes, her child was put to nurse, she herself put into a place where she is now giving satisfaction, and earning bread for her own support and that of her child."—(Report, p. 15.)

Let me read a passage from a descrip-

tion of this misery, also calculated to place it in a striking manner before you:—

"Numbers with large families are crowded into a cellar, or into a garret, and even there they are compelled to participate with others in houses, where every room is the abode of misery similar to their own, in some of those wretched habitations, to be found in whole districts of this city, which are a scandal, I will not say to the benevolence of Christianity, but a reproach to the very name of civilization itself. *Here are to be found hundreds of your poor Protestant brethren, who have not as much as even straw to lie on; who have been compelled to pledge not only the bedclothes that kept them warm, to satisfy the agonies of hunger, but even the wearing apparel of all but one or two members of their families,* whom they may not send in a state of nakedness into your streets to beg a dole to protract the miserable existence of the rest."*—(Rev. R. J. McGhee's Sermon, p. 19.)

Ye are men—and ye have hearts, and these hearts are not made of that stern stuff which is wholly impervious to the dews of kindness. Just think, then, of the multiplied misery and sorrow which are spread around through the lanes, and courts, and garrets, and cellars of this great city—a misery endured by your own brethren in the faith—and tell me whether your spirits are not harrowed up within you. If there be men who can sit unmoved, or throw their stunted shilling into the plate which should have received their pound—while they hear of emaciating famine, with its dire companion disease, wasting down the strong and the robust into premature ripeness for the coffin and the worm;—while they hear of the aged Protestant pilgrim, from long want of employment or from whatever cause, writhing in unpitied pain and privation on his cold earthy bed;—while they hear of the tender female and her infant charge, travelling houseless and forlorn at this inclement season, under circumstances that usually surround her sex with delicate care and tenderness;—I say, if there be such men, I can understand and appreciate, in some degree, the severity of the Apostle's denouncement, "If any provide not for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." 1 Tim. v. 8.—Away with the heartless selfishness that would point to the already overthronged Mendicity, or the parochial asylum, or

the prospective workhouse, and plead these as apologies for the disregard of such an appeal as this! The poor Protestant has generally a spirit, (whether often extravagantly indulged or not, I stop not just now to enquire,) of independence and self-respect, that would rather persevere even to the last extremity of endurance, than become the recipient of parish bounty, or the inmate of a charitable Institution. Can ye make no allowance for these feelings, and provide no means whereby the pressure of your poor brother's woe may be alleviated, while due respect is manifested towards the sacred sensibilities of his nature?—Will ye insist that he be dragged forth from the obscure chamber where he seeks to hide his sorrows and necessities, and forced to expose himself and his perhaps once affluent family to the gaze of a heartless world, or, it may be, the official insolence of some parish authority? O surely you will not. I tell you that there are instances of individual suffering with the details of which I have been furnished, which can scarcely be paralleled in the gloomiest annals of human misery. I have no wish unnecessarily to excite your feelings by details of this distress; but I do wish, that just enough should be communicated to make you bestir yourselves at the cry of the indigent and the dying. "How many hired servants of your father's houses have bread enough, and to spare, while these perish with hunger!" Oh! arise then, and go to your Father, and pray him to shed abroad his love in your hearts, and make it to shine forth in rays of heavenly liberality on all those numerous sons and daughters of sorrow who require your aid. Pray him to give you grace to sweep off the needless luxuries from your tables, and to retrench the superfluities of a lavish expenditure, that you may pour forth liberally on your brethren—in many instances ground down to all the gauntness and ghastliness of utter destitution—some portions of the plenty which, in his rich providence, he hath showered upon you!

Ye cannot resist the appeal, and call yourselves *Christian*; ye cannot resist, and call yourselves *human*. Oh, I should fear,—I should tremble for this land, if the cry of the poor should roll unheeded through the streets of its capital, and if all your professions of brotherly love were proved to be but the unmeaning lip-service of a convenient hypocrisy. How much, according to the last Report that

* For some other cases of surpassing interest and wretchedness, selected out of many, see Notes, No. 2.

has been published,—how much has been subscribed to enable the friends of the Protestant poor to proceed in their humane and Christian enterprise? I am informed, that the total receipts of the present year do not exceed £696, and if I mistake not, this is more than double the amount that had been subscribed and contributed during the preceding year.

Now, it is true, blessed be God for it, that a very considerable number have been relieved through the instrumentality of these contributions. Independently of the relief given in the way of loan, I understand that out of 2,151 applications made during the past year, 1766 families have received aid, and that altogether, the number of individuals relieved has been 5,302. It is true, and we are thankful for it, that much suffering has been alleviated, and that very many individuals have derived relief; but when so much has been effected through the means of so small an outlay, is it not deplorable that there has not been more to lay out?—That more funds have not been placed at the disposal of the Committee, and that they should be obliged to tell us now, "*that their funds are nearly, if not altogether exhausted, while the pressing nature of the claims made for relief are increased by the season and other causes!*" A single stroke of the pen from those whose tables are covered with plate, and whose drawing-rooms are decked out with useless ornaments, would scatter plenty and happiness among those suffering thousands, while the resources which remained would scarce give evidence that one iota had been abstracted. Oh, give to your poor brethren then, "the proof of your love," and let it not be said, as far as you are concerned, that the luxury of the land, and the licentiousness of the land, amid prevailing poverty and crime, are drawing down upon it the vengeance of the Lord.

2. *You are to justify the good opinion that is entertained of you,* "And of our boasting on your behalf." This is immeasurably lower ground than that on which we have just been standing; but still, I am rejoiced to stand on any legitimate ground from which I may hope to move you on this mournful behalf. The inhabitants of our native land are generally reputed warm in their national affections, patriot lovers of their country and its citizens, and constitutionally, (if I may so speak) kind to the poor, willing and ready, as far as their ability, yea, and

beyond their ability, to minister to their necessities, and supply their wants. Now, I would have you "justify" this good opinion by the liberality of your contributions to this most interesting charity. When we stand as sinners before the presence of our God, then boasting is, by the Gospel for ever excluded. Rom. iii. 27. In that awful presence, "every mouth must be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God." Rom. iii. 19. From every brow must come down every crown, the dust and the ashes are the bed which best becomes the prostrate sinner, when drawing nigh to Him, who is "Holy, holy, holy!" while if he do venture to speak, (though Magdalene break not the silence) the only sounds that are heard to issue from the cavern of half despair in which the conscious delinquent has hidden himself, are, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job xlii. 6.)—"Woe is me; for I am undone." (Is. vi. 5.)—"God be merciful to me a sinner." (Luke xviii. 13.)—But when standing as specially in the presence of our fellow-men, and with reference to their good opinion, if the sound of boasting be permitted to proceed from our lips, it were well that it should not seem to be a groundless boasting, and that its language come not under the severe censure of the apostle, as "great swelling words of vanity." (2 Pet. ii. 18.) Give "proof" then, brethren, "of our boasting on your behalf;" show that you are patriotic, generous, tender-hearted, as it is generally reported that you be; and let the unprecedented amount of our collection prove that "our boasting of you has not been in vain." I need not stay on this point to stimulate your charity. Eloquence, even if I possessed any, would avail nothing, if the cry of famishing brethren did not prove a thrilling oratory. Any pathos that I might be able to command, would be an idle weapon, if you are not moved with the tale of brothers and sisters, and parents and children of the same household of faith, pursued and overtaken with misfortune, broken-hearted with disappointment and sorrow, and pining away in want and destitution, almost before your eyes. I shall only further state on this head, that the case is so peculiar and so pressing—I say it with all solemnity and seriousness.—I believe the case to be so peculiar and so pressing, that every shilling now illiberally withheld, may be connected with the misery,

and possibly with the death of a fellow-creature! Yes, *it is literally for the life of many that I plead*, and he who gives not to the full measure of his ability, I venture to tell him, that he tampers with human life, does his part towards increasing the sum of human misery, and augmenting the spoils of the last enemy of man.

3. *Become exemplars of brotherly love to the churches.*—"Wherefore show ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love."

Our Lord Jesus is himself the great exemplar of his Church; but it is his will that each member of his mystical body should be so fashioned in spirit, after the likeness of the head, as to reflect continually his pure and holy light amidst the darkness of surrounding apostasy. Now, what is the example which our blessed Lord has given us in this matter? His first command, after the resurrection, was, that the proclamation of his Gospel should "begin at Jerusalem," Luke xxiv. 47,—that the Gentile world should wait until the brethren of the house of Israel should have the first offer of salvation made to them: that, although they were of all men the most unworthy of it—the men who were the murderers of the prophets, and who had imbrued their sacriligious hands in the blood of the Lord of glory—should receive the first proffer of salvation through the blood they had shed, while Tyre and Sidon, and all the cities of the Gentiles should wait until *they* had first received the message of glad tidings,—“beginning at Jerusalem.”

Let your bounty, then, commence, henceforward, with our Protestant Zion. Let this dying year record the death of your past apathy and supineness in the discharge of this most solemn duty to those of your own household; and let the new year witness such an increase of love and zeal, and Christian determination, as shall put it beyond the power of the enemies of the Protestant name to taunt you with neglect of obligations so sacred, or to point to your poor brother in the flesh and in the faith, rotting away a miserable existence, and feeding on the husks of the swine, amid your rank and wealth and luxurious enjoyment.

Oh! that we had one half of the zeal and sympathy cementing the ranks of our Protestant community, which are to be found knitting together the bands of the adversary as one man. They could well afford to spare us, and we to borrow

from them, a coal from the altar of their brotherly love. Wherever else they are deficient, here at least, with few exceptions, they are worthy, I had almost said, of our admiration. And why should the name of *Catholic* be a stronger bond of union than the name of *Protestant*? why should the name and number of the beast prove a chain of fiery sympathy around the idolatrous and enslaved, while the name and principles of the Lamb in whom we glory, are but as a rope of sand? When will Protestants awake to the danger of neglecting that which is, under God, the ark of their strength—of sleeping in the harlot lap of a blinding and luxurious world, while the spiritual Philistines are watching every opportunity and straining every nerve to sever the lock of their greatness, nay, almost of their life?

We live in a day when every thing is carried by the will of a numerical majority. Time was, when *principle* and *truth* and *justice* had some voice in determining the public measures affecting the interests of the Protestants of Ireland. Now, all legislation proceeds according to the tyrant will of a majority. It is not only duty, therefore, principle, love,—but *self-interest*, too, that demands from you a present sacrifice, if not for the comfortable maintainance, at least for the prolonged existence, of those who are identified with the best interests of our country. Set an example worthy of imitation to your wealthy brethren, who inhabit the provinces, and impress on them, by your own conduct, the sacred duty of encouraging a Protestant tenantry—of protecting them from the oppression of their barbarous neighbours, and of seeing that their children are carefully trained by a Scriptural education, in the pure principles of the Gospel of Christ. The cause of modern Popery is being worked with an energy almost superhuman; and why should there be a less expenditure of zeal and effort on behalf of the very best cause in which immortal man was ever enlisted? Various associations of Roman Catholics have been formed of late for the silent and secret, but not the less effective, dissemination of the tenets of the Romish faith. There is, at this moment, a most formidable society of the kind in this very city, though invisible to the Protestant eye, which is secretly sending forth its emissaries throughout the whole country with the same never forgotten

propagandaism in view. Popery, like the mole, works underground; her's is a system of spiritual freemasonry. Every thing is done under the secrecy of a vow, if not of a formal oath, when it is deemed advisable to conceal matters from the public eye. And I repeat, that there is a unity of purpose, a brotherhood of feeling, where the interests of Rome are concerned, which may well cause the blush of shame to mantle on the Protestant cheek. The Papists' zeal has, in these latter days, carried them so far beyond the boundaries of their ordinary prudential decorum, as to lead, in France and elsewhere, to the actual establishment of prayer meetings at stated intervals, for the special purpose of supplicating, it is presumed, the Virgin "Queen of Heaven," for the reconversion of England to their repudiated faith.*

In short, it cannot be denied, and it ought to be made generally known, that there is at present a most extensive machinery at work in England and Ireland, and on the continent, with a view to the extinction of Protestantism and the re-establishment of Popish supremacy in the British Isles.

I call then, on the wealthy and respectable Protestants of the metropolis to arouse themselves; and as one of the chief causes of this state of things has been the systematic discouragement and oppression of the humbler class of our body for whom I plead with you to-day, show by the munificent contributions with which you burthen the plates of the collectors, that you are sensible of the value of your loyal and *trust-worthy* brethren to their country and their kind, and that you are determined as one man, to keep their ranks from diminution, and preserve them from being forced into a reluctant emigration, or consigned, beneath the pressure of a wasting famine, to a premature grave. And while, under the present *régime* to be a Protestant is the same thing as to have an inscription over his forehead "Ineligible to office, and unworthy of protection for liberty or life," set the example of a noble resolve to stay this monstrous injustice, and compensate for the criminal neglect of others by the generous fidelity with which you discharge the great duty of this day. And if this marked partiality to Popery has produced a powerful impression on the minds of its subjects in these lands, as if the time was at hand when that baneful superstition was about to consummate its

triumph; give them evidence this day which cannot be mistaken, that their expectations are unfounded, that their aspirations are doomed to disappointment that the spirit of Protestantism is not "dead but sleepeth;" and that it will soon rise in the vigour of "a refreshed giant," "earnestly to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints," Jude 3, and never to pause in its victorious career, until its ears shall have been saluted with the united cry of prophets, saints, and martyrs—"Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen!" (Rev. xviii. 2.)†

(1) Let me now, in conclusion, address a few words to the POOR PROTESTANT: My poor brother! amidst the various trials and distresses with which it has pleased the Lord to visit you, there is one great blessing which you enjoy, and for which you can never be too thankful,—and that is, that you are A PROTESTANT; that the word of the living God is placed in your hands; that you have the privilege of attending the public service of God, conducted in a language you understand, so as to be "a reasonable service;"—that you are not the slave of any tyrant, whether ecclesiastical or civil; that you are at liberty to worship the God of your fathers, according to the dictates of a Scripturally enlightened conscience.

My poor brother! we feel for your temporal distress, and are resolved, nay, we pledge ourselves in this sacred presence, and through the blessing of the Most High, to exert ourselves perseveringly till you are relieved. But we would not disguise from you that there is a worse than *earthly poverty*, a worse *famine* than that of bread, a more shameful *nakedness* than that of filthy rags and bared limbs. There is the *poverty* which consists in the absence of "unsearchable riches." (Eph. iii. 8.) There is the *famine* which is occasioned by the privation of that "spiritual bread which endureth unto everlasting life." (John vi. 27.) And there is the *nakedness* that presents the soul in uncovered bareness before the gaze of that all-searching God, "in whose sight the heavens are unclean, and who charges his angels with folly."—Rev. iii. 18.

This Association has a special regard to these more fearful, though less palpably experienced wants under which you labor, and it has accordingly taken measures to press them on your attentive consideration, with a view to their permanent removal. Its proceedings are

* See Note No. 3.

† See Note No. 4.

conducted in the spirit of prayer; it provides for at least a decent attendance on the outward means of grace on the part of all who shall be recipients of its ministrations in things temporal; and it can do no more than supplicate the God of all grace, that being poor in this world's goods, you may become "poor in spirit," that you may be "rich in faith," and so "heirs of the kingdom." Cheer up, then, my poor Protestant brother, and remember that the BIBLE is the poor man's book, and JESUS is the poor man's friend. Only become his servants through faith in his atoning sacrifice, and you need not fear for the worst calamities that may threaten you, or the fiercest persecution that may be directed against you. "Consider," says the Lord, "the lilies of the field; behold the birds of the air: are ye not much better than they?" Matt. vi. 26—33. The one is bountifully fed; and the other is so beautifully clothed, that "even Solomon in all his glory cannot be compared with it." Why does the Lord employ these exquisitely expressive metaphors? It is that his people may have confidence in him, that they may not repose on an arm of flesh, but on the arm of their beloved as they journey through the wilderness; (Cant. viii. 5.) and he will in due time cause that wilderness to rejoice, and the desert of their travail to blossom as the rose." (Is. xxxv. 1.) May the Lord give you patience to endure the severities of your lot; may your wives and little ones be sustained and comforted by Him, "whose is the earth and the fulness thereof," and may He put it into the hearts of your richer brethren this day, so to give of the abundance wherewith God has blessed them, that ample means may be provided for supplying you, through the inclemency of the ensuing winter, with all needful support, and "satisfying God's poor with bread."

(2) Let me next address THE RICH PROTESTANT. Have you ever considered the weight of responsibility which attaches to the possession of wealth, especially in such times as these, and under such circumstances as those in which I now address you? You have heard the statement which has been made concerning the necessities of the poorer brethren, do you think it is an *exaggerated* statement? that the picture has been too *highly coloured*? You have heard but a very small portion of what might have been submitted to you, indeed I have purposely

abstained from wearying you with minutest details. But, if there be still a doubt, I invite you to go and examine for yourselves into the accuracy of the likeness which I have faintly sketched, and then act as the Lord shall dispose your hearts.

But assuming for a moment that the picture is correct, I ask you, will you leave this church to-day without giving anything, or such a mere trifle as you will never miss, just to save yourselves from present reproach, and steel your conscience against the future clamours of the accusing voice within? Will you allow this most righteous cause to lie, like Lazarus, at your gate full of sores, while you are clothed with purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day, without troubling yourselves to inquire whether the poor beggar be *really*, or only *desirous* to be fed with the falling crumbs? Luke xvi. 20, 21; or will you suffer distressed Protestantism to be exposed, like the wounded traveller on the highway, while you, like the priest or the Levite, pass by, in dignified indifference, on the other side, rather than fly like the good Samaritan, with your oil and wine to its relief?—If so I would not share your responsibility, under this abuse of the gifts of Providence, for ten thousand times the wealth that calls you lord.

Oh, think what a tremendous thing it will be in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, to have the cry of the famished ringing in your ears, and to have the terrible consciousness fixed, like a mountain of lead on your souls—that you *might* have given relief, and that you *refused*; that you *knew* your Lord's will, and *did it not*, and so deserve to be beaten with many stripes!

Go home then, to your luxurious halls and sumptuous feasts, and enjoy, if you can, the recollection of the shilling or half crown, that was *extorted* from you by the voice of the preacher, while it may be, five hundred times the amount is squandered on some wretched bauble that ministers to your vanity, or marks your caprice! Oh, that the words of the Lord Jesus might sink deeply into your hearts—"It is more blessed to *GIVE* than to *RECEIVE*." Acts xx. 35."

(3.) But, for a moment more, let me address THE CHRISTIAN PROTESTANT. I know, beloved brethren, how *you* will act on this trying occasion. You may not be rich, but you know how the Lord of the heavenly treasury watches as he sits over it, the mite which falls from the

heart, rather than the *hand* of him who loves his Lord. You will not disappoint your Saviour's expectations from you to-day. These brethren for whom we plead are "*hungry*, and you will feed them; they are *thirsty*, and you will give them drink; they are *naked*, and you will clothe them; they are *sick*, and you will visit them;" and then, the Lord whom you serve, will stand prominently forth before the eye of your souls, and say—"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these *my brethren*, ye have done it unto me."

I will confess, that my chief hopes of success this day are from *you*—for I well know the self-denying generosity of a truly Christian heart; and I know also, that those who have depended their all

for salvation upon the finished sacrifice of Jesus, are ever ready to dedicate themselves upon the altar of spiritual sacrifice, to the promotion of his glory, and the well being of his redeemed!

I commend this cause specially to your hands, not, I confess, without some trembling anxiety for the result; but still in the spirit of humble prayer, that the *weakness* of the advocate may not be permitted to damage the *justice* of the cause; that while his *zeal* for it has been lively and consuming—God is witness! his *success* may be, in the same proportion, abundant and complete, to the *glory* of Him "from whom all blessings flow," and to the *benefit* of our dear brethren, who are—"the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ."

NOTES.

NOTE 1, PAGE 22.

"The Board of Works (Ireland) have published their Annual Report, exhibiting in detail, the monies advanced up to the 31st December, 1837. The following items are amongst the rest:—Rev. J. Bryan, P. P., completion of Roman Catholic Chapel of Brurce, £150; Rev. C. Buckley, P. P., completion of Roman Catholic Chapel of Buttevant, £600; Rev. Thomas Barry, P. P., completion of Roman Catholic Chapel at Bantry, £600; Rev. T. Matthew, Roman Catholic Chapel at Cork, £1000.—*Dublin Evening Mail, November 26th, 1838.*

NOTE 2, PAGE 24.

Case 1.—"A mother and daughter, No. 1, Longford-street, in a very small apartment, *without food, furniture, or fire*; the mother a very old woman, the daughter sickly—unable to procure employment, and all parted with, *had been fasting from the past day on a portion of gruel, being then near night.* They both burst into tears and said they had just been considering and saying to each other, how happy they would be, could they both die then together, as no relief was near, and had been observing each other suffering so much. They expressed great thankfulness to some benevolent ladies who had occasionally sent them supplies of broth and meat. Visitor administered relief, and procured occasional employment."

Case 2.—"This case before reported to Committee, as advanced in consumption—since dead, leaving a wife and six children and a mother; visitor frequently called before the death, and felt much interested in this poor man's case, and his very interesting narration of facts during the late war. He first commenced his military career in 1803, in the Dublin yeomanry, subsequently joined the 87th, in which regiment he shared their sufferings and renown, till the termination of the war, when he was discharged without pension, the sufferings and cold in the retreat from Burgos, first broke down his constitution, which was never so strong after.

The author of the Subaltern, in one of his tracts has said, 'British soldiers may have suffered in the field of battle; but never did soldiers endure any sufferings so severe as the retreat from Burgos, forced marches in heavy rains, across the country, being cut off from roads.' "There, said this poor man, I have carried my blanket all day, and wrung the wet from it, to sleep in at night."

Relief was administered to him as far as the regulations of the fund would admit, which in some degree mitigated his sufferings on his straw pallet. The day he died his poor wife called to thank visitor for past kindness, and said she hoped, and thought he was gone to enjoy a kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world."

Case 3.—"Two females supported themselves by knitting and sewing, both in very delicate health, their first acquaintance was formed in Mercer's Hospital, where they had both been under medical treatment; being discharged, and both equally friendless, they agreed to go lodge together, to share each others earnings, and attend each other when ill; they had been recommended to a free lodging, with one condition, that they would conduct a poor blind woman, the proprietress of the room, to different religious meetings through the week. When visitor called, the first Sabbath, *he found one lying in a very sickly state, on an earthen floor, without any nourishment or means of getting it*; the other had been to conduct the poor blind woman to church. The following Sabbath found her lying in the same state, attended and comforted by her companion. Relief was administered to them, the Rev. Mr. F., Chaplain to the Hospital, recommended their case for consideration."

Case 4.—"This family was in very comfortable circumstances, the father holding a high and lucrative situation, but at his death left his family unprovided for, and after a

short time, when the Committee found them, *they were absolutely without the common necessities of life.* The second son had been apprenticed to an apothecary, but had not passed his examination or lectures, but the visitor procured him a situation in the country, and the Committee furnished him with means to accept of it, where he still remains; and the remainder of the family have been assisted as far as the society could."

NOTE 3, PAGE 27.

The following is an extract from the speech of the Honourable and Rev. George Spencer, (brother to the present Earl Spencer,) on the occasion of his health having been given at a dinner which was held at West Bromwich, in the month of December last, to celebrate his return from the Continent in improved health.

"I was presented to the Archbishop of Paris. While I was with him the conversation turned, as might be expected, on the state of religion in England; and I said, what I always say, that the prayers of the faithful are what we mainly must depend on for success, and that it would be of immense benefit, if the Catholics of France would unite in praying for us. I spoke thus, not to the Archbishop himself, but to the Grand Vicar, and without an idea of making a distinct proposal for such an association as was afterwards established. The Grand Vicar, however, at once made me speak to the Archbishop, who took up the suggestion with an earnestness and charity which surprised and delighted me. He was to receive, two days after, an address from sixty or eighty of the clergy of Paris. He appointed me to meet him in their presence. After the affair for which they were assembled was concluded, he presented me to them, explaining the cause of my appearance, and concluded by himself, requesting that they should undertake to pray for the conversion of England, and that Thursday of every week should be the day peculiarly assigned for this object. They all accepted the proposal with great alacrity. A few days after I was told by a priest whom I met, that though not present at this meeting he had heard of the archbishop's wish, and that he and twelve other priests who lived together in community in one house, had all offered mass for this intention on the first Thursday which had occurred. You may conceive how this encouraged me in my proceedings. I accordingly obtained from the Grand Vicar a circular of introduction to the superiors of religious houses in Paris, and visited about twenty of the principal. *They all undertook to make the conversion of England the special object of their prayers every Thursday, and to recommend the same practice to all the sister houses through France.* The General of the order of Lazarists, the Provincial of the Jesuits, undertook to recommend it to all their brethren. I met besides, several other distinguished prelates in Paris, who all hailed with extreme joy the thought of England returning to the faith, and promised to recommend the holy work of praying for her, to all their subjects. I was everywhere assured that I should have all France united with us. Do you think, said they, we can refuse our prayers for that country which once was the Island of Saints; and we trust will be so soon again? You would be delighted to hear me read to you the letters which I have received from several quarters, in answer to my subsequent applications. I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of giving you an extract from that written to me by the Bishop of Amiens: 'Sir,' he says, 'I associate myself, with my whole heart to your holy enterprise. Bossuet used every day to implore God that this Island of Saints, this highly-gifted England might return to the faith of St. Augustine, her first apostle. So many holy martyrs as that church has produced, so many holy and noble families as have in that country kept the faith at the cost of their political existence—so many holy French priests as have there found such generous hospitality—the prayers of former days, the prayers now recently inspired by religious gratitude, all make me believe that this great and noble nation will once more find the road in which her fathers walked. I will embrace every occasion to recommend to my clergy so good a work, in which I feel myself peculiarly interested; and I thank you, Sir, for having given me this good opportunity of expressing my sentiments upon it.' Like these were the terms of ardent charity in which all those holy people spoke of our country. And now I must tell you with what honor I was received, as the agent of this undertaking,

on my return to Dieppe, where my friend Mr. Phillips and I established ourselves for the two months we were spend together in France. It does not become me to rejoice in receiving honours, or to speak of them myself; but these honors I delight in, as tokens of the warm-hearted attachment of these good people to this great cause. The same day that I had related my proceedings to the priest of the principal church in the town, he spoke in our behalf most eloquently to his flock, and the next Sunday he requested me to give a solemn benediction in the church, and to preach in French to the congregation, who, though I spoke with the accents and expression of a foreigner, received my address with extraordinary kindness. To show you farther the interest which this object has excited in France, I have to tell you that the Archbishop of Paris, and the rest who had supported it, saw fit that 6,000 copies of this discourse, which I submitted to their judgment, should be printed and distributed through France, so that every bishop and priest in the kingdom should be thus distinctly solicited to enter the association; and the work will not be confined to France. *I saw enough while there to convince me that ere long all the nations of Europe will be joined in one great society of prayer for the conversion of this kingdom.* Such (he proceeded) was the mission with which I found myself charged in France, and, being returned to England, what do I wish but to propose this undertaking to every Englishman."

NOTZ 4, PAGE 27.

The following extracts, are from a work which has recently appeared from the pen of a *thorough Liberal*, the author of "The Great Metropolis," and other works, which prove him an accurate observer of the times. This gentleman has lately published two highly amusing volumes, under the title of "Travels in Town," in which the following passages occur:—

"In some of the Roman Catholic chapels in London, there are from four to five priests regularly set apart. There are five in Duke-street Chapel, Lincoln's-Inn-fields, and I believe there are four in Finsbury Chapel. In Duke-street Chapel there is service four or five times every day.

"The Roman Catholics are rapidly increasing in London, as well as in every other part of the country. It is an astounding fact, nay, it is one which may well alarm Protestants, that there are at this moment half as many chapels in the metropolis alone, as there were fifty years ago in the whole of England, Wales, and Scotland put together! The number in the country has, in the short space of half a century, increased from 50 to 500. And here as elsewhere, they are continuing to increase. Several have been built within the last few years; one was erected at St. John's Wood, two or three years ago, by two maiden ladies residing somewhere about Hanover-square. They gave 10,000*l.* for the purpose of building and endowing the chapel. They caused one wing to be made into a house for the priest, and another to be made into a house for themselves, in which, I believe, they have vowed to live and die. I was present at the opening, or, as it is called, consecration of this chapel, and a more imposing spectacle it has never been my lot to witness. The Roman Catholic Bishop of London, assisted by another bishop, officiated on the occasion. There were no fewer than thirty-two priests present, all in full priestly dress. High mass was performed amidst a magnificence of show, of which no one could have had any previous conception. But my chief object in referring thus particularly to the erection and opening of this new Roman Catholic chapel is, to mention that the unusual display made on this occasion—for it was admitted to have surpassed any thing before witnessed in this country—was in a great measure caused by the high spirits which the Romish priesthood are in at the rapid progress which their religion is making in England. Dr. Griffiths, who preached on the occasion, *after having told the two ladies who built the chapel, that they had thereby purchased a right to heaven, proceeded to speak in exulting terms of the extent to which Catholicism prevailed on the Continent, and of the rapidity with which the people of England were returning to the religion of their forefathers—the religion, to wit, of the Church of Rome.*"

THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

"We preach Christ crucified—

"Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God."—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

No. LXXVI.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2d, 1839.

PRICE 3d.

THE DIVINITY AND HUMANITY OF CHRIST, PRACTICALLY CONSIDERED.

TWO SERMONS

PREACHED IN THE CHAPEL OF THE MOLYNEUX ASYLUM, DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAYS, 13th & 20th JANUARY, 1839,

BY THE REV. CHARLES M. FLEURY, A. M.

Chaplain.

FIRST SERMON.

THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL, xi. 35.

"Jesus wept."

IN all our meditations on the character and works of Jesus of Nazareth, we are to keep steadily in view his proper and essential divinity. Shorn of that divinity, Jesus of Nazareth is for us no Saviour. Without that divinity, we, professing Christians, must all perish in our sins.

What is Jesus without Deity? A man 'tis true, according to the description given us in Holy Writ, of excessive virtue, excessive amiability, excessive sensibility—all that is kind, all that is to be commended; but, being not God, incapable of answering for the sins of another man, much less for the sins of a

world. To give effect to the Christian dispensation, there must be the divinity of Jesus clearly proved, in order to stamp value on his ministry in all that we profess to believe of his atonement; because there is in every human soul, however much man may endeavour to hide it from his own detection, a desire to be free from all iniquity, to transfer all guilt to some other being. Thus was it with the heathen, they laid their hands on the beasts prepared for immolation, believing the imputation of guilt. Thus is it now-a-days with the Romanist; he imputes his sin to the priest, or to the sacrifices

that are offered by the hands of that priest. With those alone who profess to deny the divinity of Christ in the present age of Christianity, that is with Socinians or Unitarians, there is something that seems to contradict the assertion that man yearns to be free from the incumbrance and weight of sin. They stand to answer on their own responsibility alone, and believe that they can reason with God for their righteousness or unrighteousness. This exception to the general desire, the instinctive desire of men to transfer their guilt to another being, arises from blindness and pride of heart—pride which stifles down conviction of sin, which leads them to believe that they are far superior to other men in all that is called moral, benevolent, honourable, or virtuous.—While life lasts, while there is health, strength, prosperity, and the incense of ministerial flattery offered by those whose interest it is to win a party, and establish a faction, by the sacrifice of every right truth and Scriptural revelation, there may be an unconsciousness of guilt; but when all are past away, and man is left to reason with his conscience alone, then must he look to some object, being or individual to whom he may transfer his iniquities, and become saved.

When we consider our race, all the members of the human family, we are compelled to confess that man is a monster of sin. In every rank, every class, every nation, every state, man is a monster of iniquity. His crimes are fearful, they press his soul down to the very nethermost hell, and therefore, do we desire and long for the proof of Jesus' divinity.—It may sound harsh and unjustifiable to say, that man is, in every class and state and nation, a monster of iniquity. What is your work in watching over the education of man in his infancy? Is it not to counteract and crush the instinctive and precocious love of sin that develops itself in that infancy? You find the children committed to your care as parents, guardians, or teachers, ready for theft and falsehood; and your labour is, to train them up, in self-restraint, and *ensure* them the mastery over their own evil passions.

When the days of childhood are departed, what is youth? The same in moral disposition. Whenever the restraint

and control of parent or guardian are removed, you find, that youth, liberated from every impediment to indulgence, rushes forth to the free gratification of sensual passion, to revel in the enjoyment of long desired but forbidden pleasures, withering and blasting many a fond hope once formed of better things, of happier results from early moral discipline; alas! all that promised once so fair has passed away, and all that is libertine and profligate alone remains. And why? because "the heart is desperately wicked," and the disposition of man's nature is to evil, and to evil continually. Of the few who retain some sense of virtue for a while, after emancipation from the discipline of schools, who go to mingle with the world, how rarely do any prosper to the end in goodness! The great proportion of that few, mixing with the world, with an evil world, with a corrupt, a selfish, a covetous world, a world exercised to cunning, crafty, and accursed practises, learn all its wisdom, grow formed into its ways and habits, are bound up with it; and after having embraced its maxims as their creed, spend their days commercially, or professionally, or politically, in the accumulation of wealth, the increase of popularity, and the advancement of self,—*self*,—*self* for ever; the idol Mammon, or rather that idol *self* is worshipped, and then, when the Gospel is preached, when the love of God in Christ is exhibited to such subjects of cool, deliberate worldliness, they condemn it. Imagine to yourselves now, one of accomplished manners, as well as most amiable life,—bring such an one, for the first time into contact with the Gospel of Christ—open to him the riches of God's love—he starts from you with shuddering abhorrence, as if a serpent had risen in his path, or as if Satan had stood before him: and that abhorrence too, has often extended to bitter persecution—and why? Because the soul hates all the tender mercies of God, because it is fearfully and hellishly corrupt: and where this violence of persecution, this rage of abhorrence does not show itself, you observe a cool indifference, a scorn of all the statements, all the arguments, and all the entreaties of Holy Writ; so that man, in his every condition—find him as you may, and visit him as you please, search

for him through the whole world—is a monster of iniquity.

Because of this truth, how desirable is it that the divinity of Christ may be clearly proved; that we may know him to be in all things adequate to bear the weight of our iniquities! Hence then, *we shall proceed to the examination of Christ's divinity*, not in the form of controversy, (this is no place now for controversy,) but for the purpose of comfort and instruction. We shall turn merely to the passage before us given in John xi. and from the whole occurrence there reported, deduce certain strong proofs of Christ's divinity, abounding with consolation to those who tremble lest that divinity should be merely an imagination, or theory, or fanciful vision, and abounding also with most extraordinary warnings and heart-searching denunciations against any continuance in sin.

We open this chapter, and the first proof of Christ's divinity that breaks on us from it, is the fact of his prescience and providence. When the disciples told Jesus that his friend Lazarus was sick, he replied, (v. 4.) "this sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby." You find here foreknowledge and providence. The Lord did know beforehand, that that sickness of Lazarus should not hold him in the bands of death; the Lord knew before hand that his distress or disease should eventuate in bringing glory to God, and glory to the Son of God; and it would also seem from the whole context of the passage, that by his providence Jesus had arranged, that the sickness should befall him at such a time, and take its regular course; for when he afterwards informed the disciples that Lazarus was dead, he added, "I am glad for your sakes that I was not there to the intent ye may believe, nevertheless, let us go unto him." We reason on the allowed ground, that this is the Word of God, that it is a true report; and as there is no question between us and Socinians as to the verity of this revelation, so, there is no question between us and them as to the integrity of Jesus of Nazareth. Socinians allow that he was an honest man. Then the whole point at issue is resolved, for Jesus speaks in

his own proper person, and pronounces himself to be God. There see, in his own language, an assertion of his providence and foreknowledge, "this sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." And thus, in other passages of Scripture, and in this same book of John, we find our Lord Jesus Christ, in controversy with the Jews, saying, "before Abraham was, I am," assuming the title of the Supreme God. Granting this Jesus then, credit for veracity for common honesty, having asserted indirectly or directly that he *was* God, we are bound to believe him such, and recognise in his foreknowledge and providence the attributes of the true Jehovah.

Having thus looked over hastily this first evidence in favor of the divinity of Christ, let us, for a moment stay and turn our thoughts to the consolations that may be hence derived. There was a *power* of providence, you perceive, here engaged:—"Lazarus sleepeth," said the Lord, "but I go that I may awake him out of sleep." He speaks not there as a deputy. He might have learned as an agent, a prophet, or an inspired man, favored with visions from heaven like Elijah; he might have learned, I say, that Lazarus was sick, that Lazarus should rise again by his instrumentality; but he does not use the language of an agent, he speaks in his own proper person, as an independent actor, as free, "I go, that I may awake him out of sleep." This is the language of conscious divinity alone.

Now, this Lazarus was sick, that sickness had not fallen on him fortuitously, it had not reached him in the common course of events. It seems to have been directed by the finger of God, and ruled by the providence of Jesus Christ. From that sickness Lazarus was subsequently delivered, after it had been consummated by death, and that sickness did end in bringing honor to Christ, proving his deity, confounding Christ's enemies and comforting his disciples. What was Lazarus? No more than a believer, a follower of Jesus in faith; we take him merely for an example of divine mercy, compassion, and providence; and we have the assurance from the whole history

before us, that the same Jesus who loved Lazarus, loves every one here present that believes in his truth, acknowledges his perfect divinity, and his perfect humanity; who has cast on him the burden of his guilt, and confessed his sole power to save.

Now, there is not a single circumstance which has been ordained from the foundation of the world, that has not been ruled and regulated by the providence of Jesus Christ. If it is said, that he "upholds all things by the word of his power," and that "by him all things consist," in proper order and form, well may we believe that he exercises special providence over his people as *his* people, his brethren, as those whom he loves. In sickness or health, riches or poverty, the multiplying of enemies, or the bereavement of our friends—in all these circumstances, we may know that the Lord will be with us. *Here* then is comfort to the mourning believer. Have you fallen into troubles? Are you laid on the bed of languishing, and brought down to the gates of death? In all this, remember that Christ is at hand, and that your sickness shall not be a sickness unto eternal death, but the mere means of conveyance to a life of eternal joy. Count not yourselves, in that weak and debilitated state, out of the service and beyond the power of bringing honor to your God. Your meek submission to his providence brings him honor. Recollect, though there may not be fixed on you, in the time of patient suffering, the eye of any mortal, yet the apostle says, "we are made a spectacle to angels," the eyes of exalted intelligences are on you, when you submit without a murmur, saying, "the Lord's will be done."

We go on then, and the second proof of Christ's divinity is opened to us in his own saying, v. 25 "I am the resurrection and the life." In Romans i. 4. St. Paul adduces Christ's resurrection as a full proof of his divinity; for he says, he was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness *by the resurrection from the dead.*"—Mark you, the phrase Son of God does not derogate from the divinity of Christ, but proves it. What does Son of man signify? his proper humanity, that he is part and parcel of our being; so the

expression Son of God shows that Christ is part and parcel of the Divine Being, essential God.

Now what is resurrection? It is not merely re-animation such as was conferred on Lazarus, it is re-construction, re-creation, it is the taking up of the dissipated atoms that once composed the human frame, placing them together, joining every member, casting life into every function, restoring the equilibrium of mind, and fixing the spirit once more in its habitation—this is resurrection. And it means something more, it means beside, restoring and reviving the glorifying of man. Such is resurrection from the dead, that resurrection of which Jesus was the first fruits, and Jesus too the author. Now, if resurrection, which is the overturning of the realm of death, the destruction of the power of death, be, as it most plainly is, a re-construction, a re-creation, is not this an evident proof of Christ's essential divinity? Satan may marr the fair works of God, and death may produce havoc among us, scattering the visible elements of our body, dissipating its several parts and portions.—But Satan, death, and every change that takes place in this world cannot annihilate, cannot destroy. To him alone who created, belongs the power really to destroy, and to him who made, at the first, man in all his fair proportions, belongs the power to remake and to restore. Thus then, Christ comes before us as the mighty Creator, as Jehovah, with all his power to restore all things as at the beginning of the world. If we turn to Revelations, we shall find it said there, "behold, I make all things new," a new heaven and a new earth, when the redeemed of the Lord will be brought together in new and glorious order.

What comfort is there in this second evidence of Christ's divinity! It tells us, beloved friends, to fear not death, neither the slow wasting of our present tenements, or the sudden crushing of the world; it tells us that the God who intended man for an eternity of bliss, an immortality of soul and body, hath determined that that intention shall be fulfilled; he will raise the corrupt body of man to incorruption and immortality, and glory; no part of his plan, not one of his purposes ever could, or ever shall

be thwarted. Furthermore, you have here the promise that you shall never die—"he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die." Never shall the believing soul lose its consciousness, lose its enjoyment of Christ, lose its assurance of eternal peace, and favour with God.

When we are taught that an extraordinary alteration is to take place on death and resurrection; that our whole form shall be changed, that identity shall be lost, that wife shall not recognise husband, nor brother brother, nor parent child, we must feel troubled, and tremble on the eve of another state of being for which we have no preparation made in our accustomed feelings and affections here. But no, the Scripture tells us on the contrary, that we are to see face to face, that we are to know as we are now known, that our identity will remain, that our denominations will remain, and that while those ties of relationship that are inconsistent with a state of perfection shall vanish away, that every obligation of affection, every bond of attachment, every relation that can add to happiness shall continue with us for ever. So then, our essential being, our marks of identity, our peculiarities are to be sanctified and glorified; and we are comforted in the thought that we shall not wander in a region of uncertainty, but shall rest with the family of God, knowing and known to each other, rejoicing with each other, and above all, praising with one conscious mind our great Covenant Head, the Author of resurrection.

3d. This chapter, from the text, "Jesus wept," opens to us the divinity of Christ. You might imagine perhaps, that the phrase is descriptive rather of his humanity. On the subject of his humanity, I purpose addressing you next Sabbath morning from the same text; but here, at present, I do think that the text shows us much of the deity of Christ. Whenever you read in Scripture, that Jesus did weep, it was with sorrow for the sins of his people. Thus, in Luke xix. "when he was come near Jerusalem, he beheld the city and wept over it, saying, if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace, but

now they are hid from thine eyes."—Again, when you pass on, in the 11th chapter of John, you find the surrounding multitude objected against the divinity of Jesus saying, what! "could not this man who opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?" And the Lord "again groaning in himself, cometh to the grave."

This insinuation against his power and against his Godhead, this expression of infidelity it was, that wrung the heart of Jesus with grief, and caused him to groan and to weep afresh.

There is in this sorrowing of Christ only an agreement with what is said of God the Father: for instance in Deuteronomy, v. 29, where the Lord is delivering his instructions to the people through the mediation of Moses, when he suddenly breaks out into sorrow over the ignorance and apathy of his people, "Oh, that there was such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever." Such is the language of Jehovah's sorrow; with the same sorrow Jesus wept over the infidelity of the multitude around him, who insinuated against his power and his divinity. Such sorrow proves the divinity of Christ, does it not? Take any case from scripture of an ambassador from God into whose power it was put to speak for the divine majesty, and to plead the cause of heaven against sinners; and where he is brought face to face with the blaspheming multitude, you discover, in most cases, yea, almost always, that natural indignation predominates, rather than sorrow of heart and anguish of spirit such as Jesus betrayed,—"Master," said the Lord's disciples, even James and John who were of the tenderest and mildest natures, "wilt thou that we call down fire from heaven upon them?" because they did not receive Jesus of Nazareth, and did not acknowledge him as the Saviour—You find even Paul, zealous as he was, and forward in the cause of the Gospel, speaking at times with severity and indignation rather than exhibiting a tenderness of spirit that could weep over hardness of heart and unbelief. Angels show not this same tenderness. They are righteous, because consecrated by

God and preserved by his grace and power, they are God's host, they are God's warriors against the spiritual powers of the air, their language is, "The Lord rebuke thee;" Christ's language was tears of sorrow. This, therefore, speaks to us with more eloquence than man was ever endued withal, upon the danger, upon the ruin that must involve every unbeliever. If God mourned over this world in its defection and rebellion, if he compassionated it so, as to send his Son to be its Redeemer; if God, in human form, visited this world, inspected every scene of woe, and ministered to every affliction with his own hand, gave honor to whom honor was due, censure to whom censure, and tears to whom tears; then, Christ's lamentation over unbelief, does testify to us that unbelief is the last, the deadliest condition of crime. There is for that, at the final state of man, no remission, no salvation.

There is a form of address suited to every state of man, in this Holy Word of God. The persons around Jesus were infidel, as to his divinity, because of their ignorance; they had not searched the Scriptures, they had not observed the correspondence between the prophetic accounts of Scripture and Jesus, therefore they were ignorant or unbelieving, and the Lord mourned over them, as lost.

Now, are there among us this day, (as in so large an assembly there may be) some who know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ?—who passing along the common course of time, and mixed up with the cares of this world, are content with a bare nominal profession of Christianity, and with the formal assemblies and services of religion from Sabbath to Sabbath, and who have not yet rolled the burden of their sins on Christ, made the transfer of faith, and given themselves wholly up to the Lord—what is your state? Why, that the Lord weeps over you as lost, that the Lord expresses your condition to be of all conditions most miserable. Oh, beloved sinners, who have hitherto stood aloof from God, and have not embraced his salvation, can you withstand the tears of the Son of God? Can you resist that argument? Here is a God of all tenderness and compassion, and I would beseech

you to approach him, to make one with him through faith; to become, through him, saved, that he may rejoice over you, as he did in the conversion and salvation of others,—“now is the Son of man glorified, now is the prince of this world cast out.”

Lastly, we find Jesus at the grave of Lazarus speaking as conscious God, when he uttered the words “Lazarus come forth!” Immediately, he that had been dead rose up from the tomb in his grave cloaths, and came forth in the perfect possession of all his mortal powers. Observe the whole circumstance of this miracle, it was not tentative, a mere experiment; it was not the resuscitation of one whose life might have been for a time only suspended; four days had Lazarus been dead, corruption had set in, and sealed him for its own. Jesus stood among his enemies and friends, commanded the dead to rise, and the dead came forth; corruption was put back, all injury sustained in the person of Lazarus was removed, he was restored completely and was received into the arms of those who had mourned him as lost for ever. This was a full proof of Christ's divinity, on his own authority he commanded the grave to give up its possession, and it obeyed.

It is said in Scripture, that “the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God.” That was a word of mercy; for the Lord lived among them that were dead in trespasses and sins, and, preaching to them the Gospel of salvation, conveyed to them the life of his Spirit. There is a day coming again however, “when the dead in *their graves* shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall die for ever for the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God.” It shall be the last day, the day of judgment, the day when mercy shall have ceased, the day of the second resurrection when the sea and the earth shall give up their prey, when all the unbelieving and ungodly and blaspheming shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ. There are two appeals, one now is, and the other is yet to come, to the dead. Christ now speaks to you from his word. Oh, hear him and your

souls shall live. Hear him not, and when he speaks the second time you must both hear and obey! That is a time of vengeance to the ungodly and to the unbelieving, when he shall shake the heavens and the earth, and drag forth the tenants of the tomb to his judgment seat.—“Come forth” shall then be the summons to damnation; and why? because they who shall receive that summons, shall be they who knew him not on earth, who believed him not, who received not his testimony, who would not confess him to bring glory to the Father, and who rejected his salvation. Aye, we may trifle with Christ’s summons of mercy now, and say, on to-morrow, or at a more convenient season I will receive this word and give myself to the Lord. But to-morrow, the convenient season, may never come, and if it should come, it will find us one degree more hardened

against heaven; and next year may come, and years may roll on while we procrastinate and carry on the hardening process of the heart, till we go down to the grave steeled to the very soul against mercy; and then—what then! why we shall hear the voice of Christ at the last, whether we like it or not, and we *must* rise at his call; and stand shivering, defenceless, self-condemned and despairing before his throne to receive that sentence, “Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.”

May God of his infinite mercy cause all who are here present no longer to trifle with the day of salvation, but to receive his favour with devout thanksgiving, ascribing all honor, glory, and dominion and majesty to Jesus of Nazareth—God and man combined, world without end, Amen.

THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST.

SECOND SERMON

PREACHED IN THE CHAPEL OF THE MOLYNEUX ASYLUM, DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY, 20TH JANUARY, 1839,

BY THE REV. CHARLES M. FLEURY, A. M.

Chaplain.

ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL, xi. 35.

"Jesus wept."

By the Lord's good mercy, we are permitted to resume the subject opened on the last day of our meeting together, and to consider the second great doctrine that may be deduced from the verse before us, or rather from the chapter generally, out of which it is selected. We have briefly examined the perfect divinity of Christ, we go now to consider *His perfect humanity*.

It might appear to you almost absurd to broach such an undoubted doctrine as the humanity of Jesus Christ; but there are several reasons that should induce us to take up the subject seriously, as one of importance. As for instance, in former days, immediately after the apostolic age, we read in ecclesiastical history, that some heretics who prevailed rather extensively, in their preaching and doctrine denied altogether the humanity of Christ; they asserted his divinity, and, in connexion with this assertion, did declare, that on the cross hung suspended only a phantom body, or if a real being of flesh and blood was there crucified, it was Judas Iscariot, or some other traitor substituted by the miraculous power of God, in the place of his Son. Now if such an extraordinary heresy did prevail, why may not the same heresy appear again, and disturb the peace of the church?—But there is another reason why we should look to the humanity of Christ. Do you not recollect, that but yesterday our own spiritual realm was invaded by strange

doctrines, which urged on, by infatuation and enthusiasm, went to dishonour Jesus, to deny his perfect manhood! and when, we thus find, that even in our own day, the church is not exempt from error, at least that we are not secured against the introduction of error amongst us, should we not stand prepared, with full, clear, and determinate knowledge of the humanity of Christ, to rebut and confound all such heresies?

And again, why ought we not to understand the humanity of Christ, when it is on that humanity that every thing relating to the grand scheme of redemption depends. Recollect, that God did not suffer; recollect, that God is incapable of suffering, without body, parts, or passions; we cannot inflict on him injury; nor can God endure wrong, or pain, or agony. It was God in Christ that suffered, it was the perfect humanity of Jesus that underwent the curse for us, supported by the fulness of the Godhead; which fulness of the Godhead did enable that humanity to hold, and bear up, under the wrath that ought to have crushed the church of God for ever. Unless we comprehend the full humanity of Christ which was supported by divinity, we cannot know the value of the atonement, we cannot know the consolation afforded in the doctrine of redemption, we cannot know the security of the redeemed through the all-perfect offering made for them once for all.

Lastly, it is imperative on us, in consequence of the age in which we live, to know clearly the doctrine of the humanity of Christ, because that doctrine shall be denied by the last heresy that shall trouble the world. It is against the incarnation of Jesus Christ that Antichrist shall raise up all his opposition. If you turn to 1 John ii. 22. you find there written, "who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denieth both the Father and the Son," and (iv. 3.) "every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God, and this is that spirit of antichrist whereof ye have heard, that it should come, and even now already is in the world." Take with you then the revelation of Sacred Writ, as a rule for detecting what antichrist is, and as we have not found in the world YET, any person, or any prevailing system that denied the incarnation of God, that denied the humanity of Christ, so shall you be guarded against all the infatuations and deceivableness of unrighteousness that shall be hereafter propagated by antichrist.

Now, what is this antichrist? You are told he is such a being as the world never yet saw, one that exalts himself above all that is called God in heaven above, or in earth beneath, that he shall work signs and miracles to deceive, if it were possible, even the elect, the saints of God, and that he is reserved for a destruction which Christ in person shall inflict on him, and on all his enemies that know not God, and obey not the Gospel.

Perhaps you believe, that antichrist has already come, that the antichrist, the emphatic antichrist of Scripture, has already appeared—then the doctrine I would wish to deliver about antichrist at this time must be to you a stumbling block. Mark, how smooth the course of your prophetic history is to run. You believe that popery is the antichrist, that all the pestilences, troubles, wars, woes, famines, earthquakes, persecutions which Christ said should come before the end of the world, that all these have passed away, and that now the evil spirit that is embodied in popery is to give place and depart before the breath of the Lord and the brightness of his coming, that is to say before the brightness of his spiritual presence, which shall banish from the

world the darkness of the apostacy, and all the despotism of Rome. You have thus got out of all the difficulties and troubles and fears of the last days, and you are waiting patiently till that which is now the dawn of religious morning on the world, shall become the perfect day; when the Son of righteousness shall rise to his meridian glory with healing in his wings.

Observe, how this erroneous view of the future history of the church vanishes before the truth. Antichrist is described as one, that shall deny the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Did Rome ever deny the incarnation of Jesus Christ? Never; on the contrary, the blasphemies and errors of Rome have been based on the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Is it not, on the fact, that God was born into the world, that God was enrobed in flesh, that the romanists build up the deity or divinity of the Virgin Mary? Is it not on account of the incarnation, they call her the mother of God, and then worship her? Is it not on the incarnation that romanists have established the extraordinary doctrines of the sacrifice of the mass, and transubstantiation, with the blasphemous and idolatrous adoration of the consecrated wafer? Thus you find that Romanism is the very reverse of antichrist in this particular; at all events, that nominally, Romanism has upheld the incarnation of Christ to prop up its damning doctrines, while antichrist shall deny the incarnation of Jesus altogether.

Notwithstanding all that has been said, and without any contradiction to what has been said, permit me to turn back. I have spoken to you of the antichrist that is to come, this does not hinder in the least degree, that the passages applicable to antichrist literally, may be, spiritually, and therefore properly levelled against popery. You have in Scripture frequent evidences that many prophecies have a double application, or a double fulfilment. You are told, for instance, that before the great and terrible day of the Lord, Elias shall come. Of John the Baptist, Jesus said, "if you are able to bear it, this is Elias who was for to come." But when John was asked personally, "art thou that prophet? art thou Elias? he answered no." "Who art thou, then," said they, he said "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths

straight." In John the Baptist then, there was a spiritual fulfilment of the prophecy, while the literal fulfillment, the literal advent of Elias is yet to be known. So the Psalms give us a literal fulfilment, and a spiritual fulfilment in describing the experience of David and the experience of the Son of God, as we shall presently have occasion to observe by a reference to Psalm xl.

Were this view of the prophecies generally received, namely, that there is a spiritual application and a partial one, a literal and a full one, would it not put an end to that strife, that unfortunately exists at present among brethren and ministers of our church, while they should wield every legitimate weapon, and draw out from the great depository of God every form of holy artillery to confound, and overturn that iniquitous system which, in this country, has produced so much misery? If it is said in Scripture, that antichrist shall come, work miracles, exalt himself above all that is called God and worshipped, and that he shall be destroyed by the breath of the Lord and the brightness of his coming; spiritually, do not these texts apply to Romanism? Has not the papacy assumed divine right? Has not the title, God on earth been given to the pope? Popery has claimed the power of working miracles, or asserted it was vested in the church, popery has changed times and laws; and will not these verses apply spiritually to overturn this iniquitous system?

This should form the subject of earnest and serious entreaty from every one of you, who value Protestantism in this country, to our champions of Protestantism, no longer to waste their strength in mutual conflict, but, all agreeing that this is the word of God, that it denounces the apostasy of Rome, and marks it out to perish at the last day before the Lord in person; they should be bound together in love to God and faithfulness to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ, to raise all their powers against that iniquitous system which has covered our land with idolatry, stained it with blood, and destroyed, for ever, the souls of millions of our people.

To come now to our text and the subject of this day. We have to examine *the humanity of Jesus Christ*. The chapter before us opens with an indirect,

yet I think, full testimony to the humanity of Christ, xi. 5, "Now Jesus loved Mary, and her sister, and Lazarus." There is a specification here you perceive of a particular attachment to these individuals, that attachment of course does not belong to divinity or deity, because God feels not to man naturally and essentially any particular attachment. God, high raised above man, and seeing into the heart of man, observes only one mass of crime. "God," we are told in Scripture, "is no respecter of persons." All this belongs to the character of Jehovah. Man alone distinguishes his brethren, unites with those to whom he is drawn by any assimilation or by any sympathy; and so, particular attachment or peculiar friendships are a part of humanity. If you allow this, then the notice of Christ's particular attachment to the family of Bethany is a notice of his humanity.—That attachment was not a secret one, it was published to the world, and known of all men, insomuch that when Lazarus was ill, the sisters, having no stronger arguments to use, to beseech and procure the assistance of the Lord for their relief, having no extraordinary virtues to rehearse, nothing to urge his haste, sent to him, saying, "Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick;" they rested emphatically on that attachment which Christ had permitted them to know. Similar was the attachment of the Lord to John, the brother of James, who laid his head on his master's bosom—all this you will allow belonged to the humanity. Of what character was this humanity? Like our own, stained, polluted, corrupt and fallen? No, no, it was a holy thing, a perfect thing, as perfect, and more so (if we can make degrees of perfection) than that of Adam when he came forth from the hands of his Creator.

Recollect, every moral disposition in the descendant is derived from the sire, "as your fathers did, so do ye." Jesus of Nazareth, born of Jehovah himself, in his moral nature inherited no sin, and was spotless and without blemish. The prince of this world sifted him to the heart's core, and found in him nothing, he was pure, even to death. And while Jesus was pure and perfect, without fault or error, or trace of iniquity, he was a man that formed friendship, showed peculiar attachment, and a man who once

engaged in love, a friendship to any human being, never failed and never deceived.

For one moment, look to the great advantage resulting from this view of the humanity of Christ. It affords you every possible consolation, whatever be your misery or affliction in this life; if you are fatherless, childless, friendless, forsaken, the outcast of all men—here is Jesus of Nazareth, the same Jesus that “loved Mary, and Martha, and Lazarus,” that hastened at their call to relieve distress, and alleviate woe, ready to solace you, to wipe away every tear from your eyes, and relieve you in all your adversities here below, because God has given to him “all power in heaven and in earth.” Here is this Jesus, ready to come forth at your summons, and to show you the same tender attachment and kindness he did to the family of Bethany. Only believe! We cannot go beyond the bounds of the Gospel, we cannot go on the American heresy of Universalism, that Christ has died equally for all men, that Christ has loved all men equally, that Christ will protect all men, and will, at the last, glorify all men. No, no,—ours is a Gospel, derived from the word of revelation. In that Word we are told, that Jesus lived and died to bring his people to glory. He hath counted his believing people in this world, and not one of them shall be lost, not one of their sorrows shall lack his sympathy.—Such is this Jesus, he is prepared to meet with the least in this congregation, and bless that least, when the world has frowned on him, and every earthly consolation has failed.

Consider the advantage of contemplating thus the humanity of Christ,—Christ ate with the family, drank and associated with the family, sat down with them as a friend. In his communication and converse with this family, you observe that the Lord never once lowered his dignity, or lost sight of his commission; whenever occasion did offer, the Lord was prompt to administer salutary instruction, and to advertise them, that “one thing was needful,” and that whosoever had chosen that good part, should find, it would never be taken away. Christ is now your example; from his intercourse and intimacy with the family of Bethany, learn that he has sent you who believe, out into the world as his ambassadors; he has

commanded you to glorify God by standing up in defence of his truth against all hazards and enemies; he has also charged you to be his missionaries to all men, to plead with them, to exhort them, to warn them, and entreat them to have mercy on their own souls. I do not mean to say, that the world scoffs at the idea of the great importance of making sure of eternal life. No, the world has very many excellent moral sayings, and will allow, that religion is a needful thing. But while the world is smooth and eloquent in its moral maxims, it is devilish and unceasing in all its efforts to carry away the heart from these maxims, to make the heart a victim to its power and its prince, by vanity and pride. Therefore, while the world is the great scene of temptation to bring man from serious reflection on the things of eternity,—you are to beseech men, and warn them, and win them by a word fitly spoken, to salvation. Think not that the Lord Jesus would have you go forth in a spirit of moroseness, or uncharitable harshness to warn men, as ascetics from the desert.—No, no,—he commands you to be meek and lowly, not to break the bruised reed or quench the smoking flax, but in all things to order yourselves in his likeness, and commend his doctrine by love to your fellow-sinners.

Look again, at this development of the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ. It teaches you to put on the very character of Christ; this family enjoyed his society. Now, it is not a matter of probability, that this was an amiable family, but it is almost a certainty; there are traces of amiability in their history; they were united in the truest attachment; they loved each other ardently, and they had many friends to sympathize with them; for many of the Jews came to visit the sisters on the death of Lazarus. If they were not an amiable family, they would not have met with this amount of tenderness, kindness, and respect from their acquaintance. We find that John was a man of great amiability, and judging from his style of composition, we would say, that he originally received from the God of nature much suavity of spirit, as well as from the God of grace much true amiability; there is nothing more probable than this, that the strong regard which Jesus showed to this John the brother of James, was founded on a

sympathy arising from a resemblance between their characters. If you value the society of Jesus, if you would partake of his sympathy in your affliction, if you would have him your friend in all things, I would beseech you, "by the meekness and gentleness of Christ," "be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewal of your minds," put on the Lord Jesus in lowliness, in meekness, in kindness and courtesy, in all graciousness, that you may prove suited to his companionship.

However, to go on with the proofs of Christ's humanity. We see in the second place, that *Jesus was exposed to suffering and exposed to death*. In v. 7. we are informed that he said to his disciples, "let us go into Judea again, his disciples say unto him, the Jews of late sought to stone thee, and goest thou thither again"? Christ was thus liable to suffering, and open to every injury and agony that could be inflicted, even to death. Now, it is this very liability to suffering that provides us with a full sacrifice in Jesus. Were he altogether divine and incapable of suffering, there would be no redemption in him, no sacrifice, no shedding of blood, and therefore no remission of sins.

I know full well, that among some of the blasphemies that have been poured out with impious daring, one of the most horrible made by those who call themselves rationalists or deists against christianity is, that it represents God as a sanguinary monster, who gloated over the bodies of slain beasts, and at the last, was satiated only with the blood of his own Son. It makes the flesh creep, and the blood run cold to hear these blasphemous allegations against our God, and against our covenant of redemption. Oh, the irrationality, the wantonness of these blasphemers. These men, these rationalists do all allow, that the beasts of the field are given to man's hand for his use and consumption; now, we ask, if they are given to man for his use and consumption, were these slain beasts better applied of old in the garnishing of an entertainment for the pampering and indulgence of the gluttonous, sensual appetites of men, than they were, when applied to exhibit, in the most vivid manner, the redemption of God in Christ Jesus, than when they were made the emblems of our salvation, and the tokens of eternal life, to convey to man, not

temporary enjoyment but to be to him a permanent and eternal blessing by the increase and support of faith? Can that God be called a sanguinary God because he gave his Son to die for sinners, who has sworn over the world, "as I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of a sinner?" Is that a sanguinary, cruel God who pitied the world, who sent his Son to rescue us, and in that Son, lived out, and acted out, and suffered all that was necessary to purchase our peace?

We have here before us, in the christian dispensation, a perfect Saviour, a perfect sacrifice, a perfect redemption. Does it trouble you to understand this redemption—this matter of sacrifice? Does it cause in your minds any doubt or difficulty, how the shedding of blood can take away sin? The matter is simple; it is altogether the business of substitution, that one word explains the mystery, a mystery which God has revealed. God declared, that "the soul that sinned should die;" we are to die or our substitute must die; our substitute has died, Jesus died for us, that we might live pardoned and saved. This is the doctrine of redemption, of atonement, and let me observe to you, that this unravelling of the mystery of atonement is that which God has given to us in the very law of social life. The world is governed by substitution, there is not a single proceeding in which we are occupied in this life but is a proceeding of substitution. A man befriends his fellow, by substitution; he raises his companion to prosperity by the substitution of his own interest, by his own property, his own person; man relieves, and sometimes rescues from the afflictions of this life, his fellow-creatures, by substitution:—and so it was by the substitution of himself—the Lord Jesus came to save us from eternal wrath.

Having shown, thus briefly, from the humanity of Christ the complete substitution of a perfect Redeemer, let me charge you to hold fast by the cross of Christ, to say "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Oh! were the last words of the dying Saviour written on man's heart, "it is finished,"—were these words written in indelible characters on his soul, could he marr the fair proportions of Christianity by super-adding

to them his own righteousness ; or destroy the liberty and freedom of divine grace, by entangling it with his own conditional performances? Believe, that the work is finished, that Christ has accomplished all that is necessary for your redemption, and the glory of God shall rest upon you.

Lastly, as an evidence of Christ's humanity, look to the text, "*Jesus wept.*"

It is true, that the tears of the Lord were much produced by his *divine* compassion for the unbelief of the surrounding multitude, who insinuated against his divinity, because Lazarus died. But, when we read the verses as they follow in natural order, we perceive that the tears of Christ, also flowed from human sensibility. For it is written, "when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping, which came with her, he groaned in the spirit and was troubled;" and having faltered out the enquiry, "where have you laid him?" burst into tears.

Though we live in a miserable, fallen, and degraded state, though our sensibilities and passions are embarrassed, and all but extinguished by the prevalence of sin, yet we know this same passion, sympathy ; we have experienced what it is to "weep with them that weep," and "rejoice with them that do rejoice." This sympathy came from the humanity of Christ—it was the humanity of Jesus wept. In the divinity, he saw, that all the sorrows of the sisters, and all the sorrows of the Jewish relations were to pass away in one moment ; as he was about to restore Lazarus to their arms, he knew that all their sorrows should be converted into acclamations of joy. But he felt, in his humanity, compassion for those who wept around him, and he could not forbear to mingle his tears with theirs. Thus then, Jesus, as man, sympathized with the sisters and relatives of Lazarus.

What a blessing is opened to us in the consideration of this text, "*Jesus wept!*" Jesus will weep with his people, Jesus ever does sympathize with his disciples. Could he do no more for us than this, namely, to partake our sorrows, and share with us in our troubles, it would go far to diminish the burden of our earthly woes. We count that man alone truly and perfectly wretched, who has no friend,—no comforter,—no kindred spirit from whom he may receive compassion. But now, you can believe, as if you had seen Jesus standing at the grave of

Lazarus, that he will weep with you, share with you your afflictions, and thus lighten the load of your distress.

But Scripture is express on this point, Paul tells us in the epistle to the Hebrews, that this sympathy of Christ was a necessary ingredient to compose his priestly office, as mediator, Heb. iv. 14. "Seeing then, that we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession ; for we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin, let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." Your consolation is this, that you may go now from all the troubles of this life to the throne of grace, to pour out your sorrows into the bosom of Jesus, and receive from him every consolation. And better still, we go on in this epistle to the Hebrews, and we find that Christ, feeling for us in all our infirmities does more than console us by the deed of sympathy ; he pitieth our infirmities and pleads for us with God. In ch. vii. 24, 25, this mediation of Christ *toward* God, is thus expressed, "But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood, wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them ;" and thus, the mediation of Christ is complete, sympathizing with us, feeling with us, sharing with us in our sorrows, and then, rising up to plead for us, that we may receive blessing from on high : there is not a care, there is not a calamity that can come on you, but the Lord will pity you and aid you ; when you approach him in the power of faith, and in the confidence of a friend and brother.

You may say, perhaps, this is consolation for what we may call sufferings in this life, but is there any consolation for us in our sins ? Can Christ sympathise with us, when we experience the bitterness of remorse, the tortures of an accusing conscience, when the flames of hell seem to prey on our very vitals ?—Aye, even here, Christ can feel for us. He never sinned, it is true, never did guile proceed from his mouth, no stain of iniquity ever was in his heart ; if so, the hopes of men were dashed to earth.

But though Christ was spotless, yet we do read, that as he was our substitute, God laid on him, as if he were guilty, all the consequences of our crime, and he had then to wither under the curse, and then to writhe under the agony and remorse of sin. To prove this, look to psalm xl., it contains some undoubted prophecies of Jesus Christ in his first coming; as for instance in verses 6 and 7, "burnt offerings and sin offerings hast thou not required, then said I, lo I come." This is Christ, as Paul tells us in the Hebrews, concurring with the Father in the covenant of redemption. Read on, and you have the experience of Christ when he, as our substitute, did cry to heaven, "withhold not thou thy tender mercy from me, O Lord, let thy loving kindness and thy truth continually preserve me; for innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up, they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me." There was Christ suffering under the imputation of sin, and under all the horrors of remorse. If Christ tasted all this, can he not feel for you?

Oh brother in the faith, who hast been betrayed into transgression, recollect, that this Jesus reproved Peter after his base denial, after his ungrateful and cowardly desertion of his master in the last extremity, with no more bitter censure than this, "Simon Peter, lovest thou me." Your blessed and divine Master is ready to pity and pardon you in your transgressions, apply to him, he ever liveth to make intercession for you, pray

to him, that you may go and sin no more. Are there among us yet, any that have not gone to Jesus, that have never sought an interest in his intercession, or entreated him saying, "Lord, save or I perish?" You may think your iniquity is too great to be forgiven, and that the amount of your crimes is too heavy to be removed by any act of divine mercy; God has told you, "as far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." God has told you that his Son died for the chief of sinners. Are you the chief of sinners? Are you a blasphemer, an obstinate, daring infidel? No, well then, come now to this Jesus, who "ever liveth to save to the uttermost those who come unto God by him." Place the greatest monster the world ever saw under the teaching of the Gospel, and if he is brought to believe it, as sure as God is in heaven he shall be saved; for God has said, "whosoever believeth shall not be confounded."

Beloved brother sinners, there is but one crime unpardonable, and it is the entire, enduring, obstinate rejection of Jesus. If he was a mere brother beloved, a brother born for adversity, full of sensibility, sympathy, tenderness, why your coldness towards him is an aggravation of all past sins, and if continued to the end it is the only blasphemy against the Holy Ghost which is now possible. Cast not away then the gospel of pardon and salvation, but draw near to him who ever liveth to make intercession for lost sinners, who can save to the uttermost, and your souls shall live.

THOUGHTS

SUGGESTED BY ISAIAH li. 11.

"The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head; they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away."

THE return of the light of morning after the darkness of the night; of a fine summer after a cold and cheerless winter; of health and strength after a season of sickness and pain; is refreshing and delightful, and demands the gratitude of the heart. The deliverance of a nation from temporal slavery or subjection, has often kindled a fire in the breast of the patriot, the painter, the poet and the historian; but, what are all earthly blessings when compared with those which are spiritual and eternal? What is the comfort of the body to the peace and rest of the soul? What is a deliverance from any earthly bondage to the opening of the tombs, and the resurrection of the just at the last great day? To that day our thoughts ought continually to be directed, just as we may suppose the minds of the captive Jews in Babylon waited and looked out for, not occasionally but constantly, the day of their redemption.—They remembered Zion, when their harps hung upon the willows, and although they found how difficult it was to sing the Lord's song in a strange land, yet they comforted themselves by the thought that they would sing it with rapture when restored to the land of their fathers. The text brings before us both a temporal and spiritual deliverance—and the joy consequent upon both. Idolatry was long a besetting sin of the Jewish people, and they were sorely scourged for it by the Almighty; and we are not to be surprised at this, for idolatry in a people professing to know the Lord, is the sin which, above all others, aims a direct blow at the authority and sovereignty of him who has declared that he is "a jealous God," and "will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images." Isaiah, styled the evangelical prophet, was commissioned to foretell the invasion of the Assyrians under Sennacherib, and also to record their utter destruction, which was an evident answer to the prayer of Hezekiah.

But he was also commissioned to declare the release of sinners from the captivity of sin and satan, by the Lord Jesus Christ, "the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." Those who are partakers of that salvation by faith are here styled, "the redeemed of the Lord," for they are bought with a price, not of corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." The blood shed, doubtless issued from a human body; but a body perfectly free from every principle, and spot, and stain of sin: and in which dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead. This is a great mystery, but one that while it appears utterly incomprehensible to the denier or doubter of revelation, is full of inexpressible delight to the true believer.

The redeemed of the Lord are employed by a new master—are engaged in a new service—and live no longer unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again. Their destination is the heavenly Zion; the prospect of it, so distinct to the eye of faith, cheers them on their way—and soon shall every one of them appear in it before the Lord. Here their days of joy are succeeded by nights of sorrow—they are doomed to sow in tears, but on their entrance into Zion they will commence a song of praise, Rev. i. 5. 6. the notes of which will swell louder and deeper throughout the revolving ages of eternity. Then will they see as they are seen—know as they are known—and be for ever with the supreme object of their love. Here their pardon is complete; but their peace does not always flow as a river—here they are enabled through the Spirit to mortify the deeds of the body, but they are liable to be overtaken of a fault, and too often their footsteps slide; but in Zion they will be released, not only from every danger, but also from every fear. They will be there recognized as the children of God; as those who have a

right to the tree of life, as those who can without intermission comprehend the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of the love which passeth knowledge. If all the saints have this honour, "what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking out for, and trusting unto the coming of the day of God." The soul was created immortal, and although by the fall its affections have become depraved, and its faculties brought under an influence that St. James describes as "earthly, sensual, and devilish;" yet there is no

alteration in the measure of its existence. How great then is the obligation under which we are laid by a knowledge of this fact, to live no longer unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us and rose again? The cross is doubtless the way to the crown, but the glory, and honour, and blessings attendant upon the crown, will throw a covering of light over the cross, so that there will be no unpleasing recollections of the sorrows and trials of which it was the author. May our portion be with the saints in both worlds.

Kilkenny.

P. R.

THE TIDE OF TIME.

My years roll on in silent course,
Impell'd by a resistless force ;
Awake, my soul, awake and sing
Glory to thee, my God, my King.

My years roll on,—then let me know
The great design for which they flow ;
And as the ship floats o'er the wave,
Thy vessels, Lord, in mercy save.

My years roll on,—the tide of time
Bears me through many a changing clime :
I've summers, winters—heat and cold,
Winds, calms, and tempests, ten times told ;

My years roll on,—but here's my hope,
And this my everlasting prop,
Though seasons change, and I change too—
My God's the same, for ever true.

My years roll on,—and as they roll,
Oh may they waft my ransom'd soul
Safe through life's ocean to yon shore,
Where sins and sorrows grieve no more.

My years roll on,—and with them flows,
That mercy which no limit knows,
'Tis mercy's current makes me glide
In hope of safety down the tide.

My years roll on,—my soul, be still—
Guided by love, thy course fulfil ;
And my life's anxious voyage past,
My refuge be with Christ at last.

THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

A SERMON

BY THE

REV. RICHARD T. P. POPE,

1 Tim. iii. 16.

“ God was manifest in the flesh.”

CHRIST has been the theme of prophecy from the fall of Adam. The various dispensations with which God has been pleased to favour guilty man, were but introductory to the advent of the Lord of glory. The rites and sacrifices of the Mosaic economy more especially, pointed to Him who suffered on Calvary. Does not reason, therefore, justify the conclusion that He to whom prophets and dispensations referred, was a Being of no ordinary character? On the present occasion, I purpose adverting to some of the evidences which support the essential divinity of the Son of God. And

may that Eternal Spirit, who has undertaken to glorify Christ, manifest Himself in the plenitude of His enlightening power; that so, on the one hand, I may not “darken counsel by words without knowledge;” and, on the other, you may “receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.” And here, I would remind you of the vast distance between the divine mind and our puny intellect. “We are but of yesterday and know nothing”—we cannot explain the union existing between our souls and bodies—we cannot understand the growth of the meanest

blade of grass which springs beneath our feet. I would press upon you, therefore, the solemn duty of submitting to the decisions of God as set forth in the Scriptures of truth—of coming as little children to the volume of inspiration—and of learning from God Himself the revelation He has given concerning his Son.

In the first place, I would remark that *DIVINE ATTRIBUTES* are ascribed to the *Saviour*. Of these, the first to which I shall call your attention, is OMNIPOTENCE. In Psalm cii. 25, 26, we read, "Of old hast Thou laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed." Now, these verses are quoted in Hebrews i. 10, 11, 12, and applied to Christ. I turn to John's Gospel, i. 1, 2, 3, and read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made." In this passage, I need scarcely observe, the sacred penman ascribes the creation of the world to "the Word"—the Lord Jesus Christ. Again: in Colossians i. 15, 16, 17. The apostle thus speaks of the Redeemer:—"Who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature. For by Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all these were created by Him, and for Him. And he is before all things, and by Him all things consist." Here it is plainly stated that "all things were created by the Lord Jesus, and for Him." Now, compare this passage with Revelations iv. 11: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for thou hast created

all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." If this latter verse be applied to the Father, it identifies the Saviour with God; for in the former passage we read, "all things were created by Christ and for Him;" and in this verse it is written, "all things for thy pleasure are and were created." On the other hand, if you interpret the passage in Revelations as referring to Christ; then, it supplies an additional confirmation of the position that the attribute of Omnipotence is ascribed to the Redeemer. Now, it is distinctly affirmed in Romans i. 20, that creation is a proof of "the eternal power and godhead" of the Creator: "The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead." But, according to inspired authority, created nature was called into being by the Lord Christ. Therefore "his eternal power and Godhead are" thereby "clearly seen."

The Saviour is represented in Scripture as *ETERNAL in his existence*. In Micah v. 2, we read, "But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Now, this passage is quoted in answer to the question of Herod, "where Christ should be born?" and applied to the Saviour. You will find it, Matthew xi. 6. The declaration of our Lord claims especial notice, as it is recorded in John's Gospel, viii. 57, 58: "Then said the Jews unto Him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am." This announcement not only points out the prior existence of the Redeemer, but shows, that His existence is ONE EVERLASTING PRESENT

ONE ETERNAL NOW. Christ did not say, "Before Abraham was, I was"—I existed; but "before Abraham was, I AM." Can an expression be conceived, more distinctly pointing out the eternal existence of the Messiah? But this declaration acquires additional force from a comparison with Exodus iii. 13, 14: "And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." When Christ affirms, "Before Abraham was I AM;" and when Moses, as you observe, was commanded to say to the captive Israelites, "I AM hath sent me unto you," I shall leave it to your judgment to determine, whether the similarity of expression employed in both cases, does not prove the God of Moses and the Lord Jesus to be one and the same?

IMMUTABILITY is ascribed to the Saviour. In Psalm cii. 26, 27, already quoted, we read, "They (the heavens and the earth) shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." These words, as I before observed, are applied to Christ in Hebrews i. 11, 12. In Hebrews xiii. 8, it is written: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Surely, stronger expressions than these cannot be employed, to denote the immutability of the Redeemer, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

OMNIPRESENCE is ascribed to Christ. In proof of this position, I would call your attention to Matthew's Gospel, xviii. 20: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst

of them." In the same connexion may be ranked part of the 20th verse of the 28th of Matthew: "Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." If the Lord Jesus were not omnipresent, could such promises as these have been made by him.

Under this head may also be classed those passages, in which the Redeemer, though on earth at the time he uttered them, speaks of himself as at the same moment in heaven. For example, we read in John's Gospel iii. 13—"No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven"—or, as it is in the original, "even the Son of man *being in heaven.*"

OMNISCIENCE is ascribed to the Saviour. The power of searching the heart will be admitted to be a proof of Omniscience. In Jeremiah xvii. 9, it is stated: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;" and the inquiry is made, "Who can know it?" To this question the answer given is—"I the LORD (Jehovah) search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." Here, the prerogative of searching the heart is claimed by Jehovah. And yet, in Revelations ii. 23, Christ asserts his title to the same right and power. Thus he speaks—"And all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works." In this passage, you will remark that the Saviour does not merely say, "I search the reins and hearts," but, "*I am he that searcheth*" them. Is not the Lord Jesus Christ, therefore, identified with the heart-searching Jehovah?

In the second place, I would observe, that DIVINE WORSHIP was offered to the Redeemer and received by him. In proof of this position, let me remind you that the Lord Jesus was again and again wor-

shipped. One single instance may suffice. When he was ascending to the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, we read, Luke xxiv. 52, "they (the apostles) worshipped him." Now, *they* uniformly repudiated any worship offered to themselves. Peter refused the worship which Cornelius was desirous of rendering him. Acts x. 26. "Stand up, (said he,) I myself also am a man." An angel, too, as we read in the Apocalypse, xxii. 9, refused the worship about to be paid him by the Apostle John. "I am thy fellow-servant, (said the angel) and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book : worship God."

On the other hand, no instance can be produced, in which the Lord Jesus declined homage paid to him. The first martyr, Stephen, worshipped Christ. At that solemn hour, when the soul was about to wing its flight into eternity, amidst the agonies of a violent death, after he had been favoured with a vision of glory, this was Stephen's departing prayer: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." "And he kneeled down, (continues the sacred historian,) and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge!" Acts vi. 59, 60. After he had so faithfully witnessed for God, in the midst of a stubborn generation—after he had been specially blessed with the approbation of heaven, visibly vouchsafed to him—can it be supposed, that in the hour of dissolution, marked with all the holy calmness of a dying saint, Stephen could have been permitted to fall into the grievous sin of idolatry? And yet, if Christ be not God, Stephen was guilty of this fearful wickedness—he offers a solemn act of worship, and commits the keeping of his soul, to a *created* being—"Lord Jesus receive my spirit!"

But, under this head it may be shown, that worship was rendered to the Saviour *in accordance with the divine command.*

It is written in John's Gospel, v. 23—"That all *men* should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father."

Is worship an honour, which the Great Supreme has a right exclusively to claim at the hands of his intelligent creatures? All will answer in the affirmative—then, that same honour should be paid to Christ, for as we have seen, "All *men* should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." In Hebrews, i. 6, the apostle writes thus: "When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." Accordingly, in Revelations v. 11, 12, 13, 14, we read, "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice—Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth for ever and ever."

Here, in strict obedience to the divine behest, the Lord Jesus, the Lamb of God, is the object of adoration to the angelic world. Worship, I need scarcely say, is the profoundest expression of homage which rational intelligencies can pay to their Creator. If, then, divine worship was rendered to Christ by angels and men—if it was commanded by the Father to be paid to him; and if Scripture declare that "the Lord is a jealous God, and will not give his glory to another"—is it not manifest that the Redeemer is, indeed, incarnate Deity?

In the third place, I would refer to proofs of Christ's ONENESS AND EQUALITY WITH THE FATHER. "The grace (writes Paul) of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." 2 Cor. xiii. 14. In this passage, "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God," are invoked on the church which the apostle addresses; and can it be imagined that he would, in supplication unite a *creature* with Jehovah, placing, at the same time, his name before that of the Father? Again: in 2 Thess. ii. 16, 17, Christ is, in a similar manner, allied with the Father—"Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work." I would also call your attention to the prophecies of Zechariah xiii. 7, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is MY FELLOW, saith the Lord of Hosts; smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn mine hand against the little ones." Now, Christ applies this prophecy to Himself in Matthew's Gospel, xxvi. 31—"All ye shall be offended because of me this night; for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." In this connexion I would refer you to Phillippians ii. 5, 6. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be EQUAL WITH GOD: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." Turn at the same time, to John xvi. 14, 15. "He (the Spirit of truth) shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it

unto you." Can any expression more clearly prove that union and equality subsist between the Father and the Son, than this "All things that the Father hath are mine?" Would it not be blasphemy on the part of the most exalted creature to employ such language? And yet the Redeemer affirms: "ALL THINGS THAT THE FATHER HATH ARE MINE." Under this head I would direct your attention to Isaiah xl. 13, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD?" Here a question is asked, but no answer is given. In the prophetic writings, it is not unusual to propose queries of this nature, and to leave them without reply, in order to magnify the character of the Great Supreme, and show that His nature cannot be controlled by any created being. Instead, therefore, of furnishing an answer to the enquiry, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord?" The prophet proceeds, "or being his counsellor hath taught him," "With whom took he counsel, and *who* instructed him and taught him in the path of judgment, &c.?" 15, 16. Now is the direction of the Spirit of God anywhere attributed to the Lord Jesus? I turn to John xvi. 7, and read, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, *I will send him* unto you." Here the Redeemer plainly assumes control over the Spirit of God, "I will (promises the Saviour) send him (the Comforter) unto you." Does not Christ, therefore, prove that he is one with the Father, or in other words, that the Spirit of God is the *Spirit of Jesus*?

In the fourth place I would observe that *the name of God is given to the Redeemer*. In Isaiah, ix. 6. we read, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, *the Mighty God*,

the Everlasting Father the Prince of Peace."

In St. John's Gospel i. 1. it is written, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and *the Word was God*. After Thomas had been permitted to thrust his hand into the pierced side of the Redeemer, he exclaims, "My Lord and my God!" his doubtings concerning Christ's identity were removed, and he discovered in the glorious person before him "his Lord and his God." Christ, too, you will remark did not censure Thomas for the avowal he made, but observed—"Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed." John 20. 29.

Again, in Romans, ix. 5. speaking of the Jews, Paul says, "Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, *God blessed for ever*."

In the fifth place I would remark, *the name JEHOVAH is given to the Saviour*. The appellation, JEHOVAH, belongs to God (we speak with reverence) as existing in himself, and without reference to creation. In Psalm, lxxxiii. 18, it is written "That *men* may know, that thou whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the Most High over all the earth." Now this incommunicable name is applied to the Lord Jesus. In Psalm lxviii. 1. 4, we read, "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered; let them also that hate him flee before him. Sing unto God, sing praises unto his name; extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name Jah, and rejoice before him."

The psalmist then proceeds to give a glowing description of the power and goodness of Jehovah, and continues thus: "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; the LORD (or Jehovah) is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place." Thou hast ascended on high; thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men; yea,

for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." Now, this last verse is applied to Christ by the apostle Paul, in Ephesians iv. 7, 8. "Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men." On these extracts I shall therefore simply again remark, that that quoted from the Psalms clearly speaks of Jehovah, and that it is applied to Christ in the passage taken from the Epistle to the Ephesians.—In Isaiah vi. a sublime description is given of Jehovah's glory. In it, "the Seraphims" are represented as crying one to another "Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD (Jehovah) of hosts." Now, the Jehovah whose glory is there described, we assert on inspired authority, is the Lord Jesus. In John xii. it is "written these things spake Jesus and departed, and did hide himself from them. But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him." The Evangelist goes on to remark that the unbelief here spoken of, was in fulfilment of two predictions—"That the saying of Esaias the prophet (continues the sacred narrative) might be fulfilled which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things (adds John) said Esaias, when he saw his glory and spake of him. Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also many believed on him, &c." The plain construction of this passage requires that "his glory" be referred to the glory of him of whom the Evangelist is speaking, even Jesus—and that glory being, according to the quotation from Isaiah, the glory of the "Jehovah

of hosts," Christ is, by the pen of inspiration, identified with Jehovah. I might refer you to other passages in proof of this position, that the name Jehovah is bestowed on the Redeemer; but these, I conceive, may suffice. I have then endeavoured to show from the sacred volume, that *divine attributes are ascribed to the Saviour—that he is an object of worship to men and angels—that he is set before us as the controller of the Spirit of God; as equal to the Father and as one with him.* I have shewn you, that *the name of God is bestowed on the Lord Jesus—that he is called "God"—"The mighty God" "over all, God blessed for ever."* I have proved that *the name Jehovah, which exclusively belongs to the Deity as existing in himself, is applied to Christ.* If you will allow, therefore, inspired testimony to determine your opinion on this momentous subject, you must "confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." Let then, all the proud reasonings of human intellect fall to the ground—let us take our proper place in God's creation—let us feel ourselves as nothing before "the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity," and render unreserved obedience to the record which God has given of his Son.

Cogent, however, as are the direct testimonies which the word of life supplies to the Deity of Christ, I would observe, in the sixth and last place, that *the Godhead of the Redeemer is a truth essential to the value of the work, for the accomplishment of which he became incarnate.* I would remark, then,—*the office which the Redeemer sustains between heaven and earth, demands that he who fills it, should be God as well as man.* In the adjustment of a difference between two earthly empires, he who is properly qualified to mediate between the parties, is one (I submit it to you) who can form just views of their characters and claims, and who possesses due influence over them. Now, there

must eternally exist an immeasurable distance between the Creator and the most exalted creature. I affirm, therefore, that the highest archangel is incompetent to entertain adequate conceptions of the unbending righteousness of the Great Supreme; and, by inevitable consequence, of the magnitude of human guilt. And, contracted as our views must necessarily be of the glories of the divine character, I would ask, is any created being able to come between the nature of God and our polluted race—to make atonement for the sins of transgressors commensurate to the claims of divine justice, and to the majesty of Heaven's administration? In answering this question, bear in mind the fearful consequences of sin, as exhibited in the records of truth. One transgression severed a world from the enjoyment of divine favour. One single act of disobedience deranged the moral constitution of man—introduced death among the inhabitants of earth—has been the fruitful source from which all our misery primarily flowed. One single act (inasmuch as it ushered moral evil into our world) has peopled hell with myriads of immortal beings. What then must be the justice and holiness of that God who has demonstrated the interminable contrariety of his mind to sin, by annexing to a single transgression consequences so tremendous and overwhelming! Could, therefore, I would again ask, a propitiation, equivalent to the demerit of human guilt, have been offered by any created nature however exalted? The highest angelic intelligences are bound by the law of their own existence, supremely to love their Maker, and to love each other as they love themselves. Rendering such an obedience they only do what it is their duty to do—there is no merit in their services—they cannot transfer them to the account of another. If, then, the Lord Jesus Christ be a created being, perfect obedience was re-

quired from him by the law of his own creation—his services cannot be imputed to the credit of others, and no atonement has been made! In this case, therefore, “our faith is vain; we are yet in our sins.” 1 Cor. xv. 17.

Again: suppose that the highest created spirit had become incarnate, and had yielded its assumed humanity unto death; what value, I would ask, could belong to the sufferings of such a being? Could they possess an efficacy sufficient to maintain the honour of the divine government—to ransom myriads of never-dying souls from an undone eternity, and restore them to the enjoyment of heaven’s favour?

On the other hand, admit that the Lord Jesus is “God manifest in the flesh;” and you discover in Immanuel, One, who, while he was man and could feel for man, could also as God take a just view of the holiness and claims of the Divine nature—One, who, as God, was not bound to fulfil the law, but who, yet, by his obedience, has “magnified it and made it honourable.” Surely, in the righteousness of such a glorious personage, there has been laid, even according to the glimmerings of reason, ample ground for affirming, that, through the work of redemption, divine wisdom has been transcendently displayed in reconciling the apparently contradictory attributes of justice and mercy. Eph. iii. 10. But, if the deity of Christ be denied, the very key-stone of the Christian system is removed, and the whole arch crumbles into dust—I CHABOD may be inscribed on the Bible, for its glories have indeed departed—it becomes little else than a mere code of ethics—it loses its grand and distinguishing features—it ceases to announce a pardon, either worthy of the character of God, or suited to that of man.

Accordingly, in the preaching of those who would strip the Redeemer of his

essential godhead, you look in vain for the great peculiarities of the faith of the gospel. The sacred page avers, that man has fallen—that “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”—that by nature we are “alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in us”—that “the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.” The scriptural doctrine, however, of man’s utter depravity is in vain sought for in the writings of those who would rob the Saviour of his Divine nature.

Again—the Redeemer affirms, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John iii. 3.

In the system, however, to which I advert, you find this important truth explained away. Instead of the renovation of the soul—instead of the heart being brought into communion with its maker—instead of the mind being illuminated by the knowledge of the Divine character—instead of the views being so changed that “old things have passed away and all things have become new”—instead of these blessings being set forth as essentially connected with “the new birth unto righteousness,” you find the doctrine of regeneration softened down and treated of, as merely relating to the outward reformation of life and character.

Again: inspired authority asserts—“Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them:” and that “by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his (God’s) sight.”

My friends, what view does the creed against which I am protesting, give of the foundation of the sinner’s hope? It bids him, I reply, look to his own services and the Divine mercy, in the expectation that God, in the exercise of his compassion, will make allowance for the infirmities of his creature, and at last graciously receive him into his kingdom.

But, my dear hearers, this scheme of salvation but ill accords with that solemn truth, borne witness to by the history of our world, our own consciousness, and the declarations of the sacred page—that there are other attributes in the divine nature beside that which we designate mercy, or with this undeniable position, that one attribute of Deity cannot be exercised except in strict accordance with the rest. Look, on the contrary, to the word of life, and you find that the substituted nature of the sacrifice of Christ is continually dwelt on. Christ, we are told, “died the just for the unjust that he might bring sinners unto God”—he is pointed out as “the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.” “God (we are assured) made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him”—that “other foundation can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ.” Numberless other passages might be quoted, shewing the vicarious character of the sufferings of Jesus, and exhibiting the work which he finished on Calvary, as the exclusive foundation on which the sinner can stand accepted at the bar of God. But in the system which I am canvassing, the Lord Jesus is held up as a mere teacher sent from God—a divinely commissioned prophet—the peculiar features of his mission are overlooked—he is not described as “the Rock of ages,” the only basis on which man can be justified in the presence of his Maker. I would, therefore, solemnly ask those who have adopted the faith to which I allude, whether their creed is capable of emancipating them from the love of the world, and from the dominion of pride and of the objects of time and sense? I would put it to them, can they draw near to God with child-like confidence and holy joy, in the assurance that their sins have been blotted out? Do they enjoy real peace with their Maker? I

would ask them these momentous questions, and implore them, as in the sight of God, to answer them with truth to themselves. In John’s 1. Ep. v. 10, it is written: “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself;” it is elsewhere declared, that the “faith” of the Gospel “overcometh the world,” “purifies the heart,” and “works by love”—it is said of the believer, that “the love of God is shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him”—that he has “a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens”—that he is enabled to address God in the endearing language of “Abba Father.” But, can any scheme of religion which leaves man in uncertainty, with regard to the all-important consideration, whether God really views him as a friend or an enemy, bring the soul into communion with the Great Father of lights? Now, the Gospel of the blessed God is proclaimed for this among other purposes,—in order to establish fellowship between the Deity and man. (1 John i. 3.) That system, therefore, which is inadequate to the accomplishment of this great design, cannot be regarded as the glorious “Gospel of the blessed God.”

In conclusion, I would leave those few considerations with the Socinian. God’s law being, like himself, unchangeable—a perfect transcript of his mind, any system of religion which virtually goes to alter that law, cannot be “of God.” Now, that law is opposed by any scheme of faith which directs man to look to his own doings as constituting, in whole or in part, the ground of his dependence. For the individual who places his hope on his own works, cannot really expect to be judged by God’s perfect law which condemns him, but by one which will lower its requirements to meet the imperfect services of man. Again, agreeably to the constitution of the mind, the basis of our hope becomes the mould of our character.

In the case before us, therefore, works being the ground of dependence—works confessedly sinful and corrupt,—the spirit which rests on such a foundation, can derive from it only a polluted and polluting influence. On the other hand, the faith which embraces the Deity of Christ, does not “make void” but “establishes the law.” For it bids man look, not to his own services, but to a DIVINE obedience—an obedience rendered by the Legislator himself to his own law, as the exclusive foundation of hope. In unison also with the principle already adverted to, in the work finished on the cross, unfolding at once, the love, the truth, the justice, the holiness, the wisdom of God—effectual provision is made for the sanctification of the Spirit which rests upon that work. “We all, (says the apostle) with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”—2d Cor. iii. 18.

THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH UNDER THE GOSPEL DISPENSATION.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN CARBERRY CHURCH, DIOCESE OF KILDARE,

ON ADVENT SUNDAY, 2ND DEC., 1838,

BY THE REV. FRANCIS HEWSON, A.M.

Curate.

TITUS. ii, 13

“ Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

Dear Brethren—There is, perhaps, no principle that exercises such an influence over the conduct and actions of men as that of hope. Hope is in fact the main-spring that keeps the human machine in motion. Take away hope, and you deprive man of all motives or incentives to exertion, with respect either to this world or the world to come.

Without this animating, all-pervading principle, none of the various operations upon which, not only man's comfort, but his very existence as a social being depends, would be carried on any longer. Without hope, the labour of the husbandman would cease, the occupation of the artizan would be laid aside, the engagements of the manufacturer would be suspended, the traffic of the merchant would be at an end ;—in short, the whole of the present social order and course of things would be broken up, and all the different classes of the human family, abandoning their several pursuits, and leaving all their various duties and engagements neglected and undischarged, would sit down to pine and perish in despair.

Now, dear brethren, hope is, in spiritual things, just as in temporal, the grand motive to exertion ; without it the soul would be paralyzed in spiritual apathy or despair. Hope is so essential to religion that where there is no hope there can be

no religion; for the very form of religion would expire with hope. This ruling principle of our nature has been uniformly recognized and acted on by God, in all his dealings with mankind. When the creation was first made subject to vanity—when, upon the disobedience of the first Adam, death and Satan seized, as it were, on the world as their prey, what was it but hope that prevented our guilty parents from sinking into utter despair? The only circumstance in their disastrous condition that could sustain their minds amidst the overwhelming calamities in which they had involved themselves and the creation, was the hope of deliverance, that deliverance which it was even then intimated, the woman's seed—the second Adam—should effect. Yes, my brethren, a gleam of hope gilded even the dark horizon of the fall. God was pleased to reveal to the guilty pair, whose disobedience was productive of such fatal effects, his eternal purpose of raising up a deliverer who would bruise the beguiler's head, who would destroy the works of the devil, and restore a ransomed creation “ from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God,” as the Apostle informs us, Rom. viii. 20. “ the creature” or (as the word more properly signifies) “ the creation was subjected in hope ;” its condition,

however deplorable, was not hopeless. It would appear, that sacrifice was instituted immediately with the fall: when God clothed Adam and his wife with skins that were taken from innocent animals, which, there is every reason to believe, he had instructed them to offer in sacrifice to him, he shadowed forth that great atonement by which, in the fulness of time, divine justice and holiness were to be satisfied, and a way opened in which, through abounding grace, his guilty and alienated creatures may be again locked in the arms of his infinite compassion. Now, dear brethren, that hope which first dawned in Eden, which supported and comforted our disconsolate progenitors in the midst of their shame, and at the commencement of their sorrows, has never been extinguished in the darkest and most cloudy seasons which have befallen the Church—it has waxed brighter and brighter to the perfect day. This anchor, by which the Church has clung, through the fiercest storms of trial and adversity that have ever tossed her ark, has never lost its hold, it has remained sure and steadfast, and affords increasing ground of security and comfort to all who will flee for refuge to lay hold upon it.

I purpose this day calling your attention, in connexion with my text, to the blessed hope which, under the gospel dispensation, is revealed to the Church of Christ. And in doing so, I shall consider, 1st. *What this hope is*—2d. *Who are those entitled to this hope*. And, lastly, *the influence which this hope must exercise whenever it is realized in the soul*. O may the God of hope be with us in the consideration of these interesting and important subjects, enabling me to speak, and you to hear, in such a way as may tend to the glory of our God, and the salvation and edification of our souls.

I.—WHAT THIS HOPE IS. The coming of the promised Saviour has, under every dispensation, formed the grand hope and

expectation of the Church. Everything that could form an object of desire or hope to God's people, in former dispensations, was always connected with this event—their hope of pardon, their hope of acceptance with the Father, their hope of the Heavenly inheritance, a habitation freed from every vestige of the curse, and fitted for the reconciled children of God of the promised seed; all were connected with the appearing of that mysterious child, whose name was to be called “Wonderful—Counsellor—the Mighty God—the Everlasting Father—the Prince of Peace!” Dear brethren, the expectation of the ancient saints of Jehovah has been realized, he has come, the desire of all nations, the hope of all the ends of the earth. The promise made by God to man has been wondrously kept. God has sent his only begotten Son to be the Saviour of the world. In Jesus, or as his name implies, “JAH,” the Saviour, the eternal “Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us;” our “help was laid on one who was mighty.” “God was manifest in the flesh;” our divine Redeemer—our second Adam, taking on him the seed of Abraham, becoming, as it were, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, has accomplished all that was necessary for the redemption of our fallen race. He has satisfied all the demands of infinite justice and holiness on man's behalf; he has fulfilled all the conditions required, in order to make man an heir of God and exalt him to everlasting life; he has, in short, repaired the breach that was made by sin; he has “put away sin by the sacrifice of himself;” he has abolished death; he has brought in everlasting righteousness; he has “brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel.”

Dear brethren, the Church is *already* “saved in hope:” “there is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus,” “they are heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ;” as members of

his mystical body they are "raised together with him, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." But though now "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," there is still something wanting to the Church, "we are saved by hope," but "hope which is seen is not hope," the thing hoped for, the possession of the inheritance has not yet been attained—the children of God are still sojourning in a strange land, they are living in a world where their Lord was crucified, and a usurper reigns, and, carrying about with them a body of sin and death, even those "who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan within themselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body."

The period to which the Church now looks forward as that which shall terminate her trials and consummate her hopes, is the second advent, the glorious appearing of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ: the blessed hope now revealed to sustain and animate the followers of Christ, in a world in which they are forewarned of persecution and tribulation, is the return of their Lord in the power and glory of his kingdom. The Church no longer looks for a *suffering* Saviour, for one who is to come in humiliation, shrouding his divine majesty under the form of a servant, and covering the beams of his eternal glory, so as to be despised and rejected by those, whose eyes were so blinded, that they could see "no form nor comeliness" in him "who was the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person." She looks for the return of her glorious spouse, at whose presence "every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." Yes, my brethren, when the Heavenly Bridegroom returns to consummate the espousals of his blood-bought bride, the Church, he shall appear in all the glory, majesty and power of incarnate Deity; it shall be said in that

day, "Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

I shall here mention some of the blessings which the saints are warranted to expect, at the glorious appearing of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ. It is then, that they who are Christ's, "shall have their perfect consummation and bliss in his eternal and everlasting glory;" not only those who are alive, and remain unto his coming, but "those likewise, who have departed in the true faith of his holy name, shall appear with him in glory." Col. iii. 4; 1 Thess. iv. 14—17. It is at the second advent "the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour, Jesus Christ," that "the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ." Rev. xi. 15. He comes not, as some suppose, at the end of the thousand years to give up his kingdom; but at the commencement, "to take to him his great power and reign." What a blessed state of things may be expected when Christ is universal king! (Zac. xiv. 9.) and his saints under him, shall "execute judgment and justice in the earth." Is. xxxii. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5. The course of this world shall not be then, as it is at present, after "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," Ephes. ii. 2. "The usurper shall be then dethroned; the old serpent shall be bound; the saints shall have the ascendancy on earth," Dan. vii. 26, 27; Rev. xx. 1—4; Nothing contrary to the will of God shall be any longer allowed; "the nations shall learn war no more." Isaiah xxiv. "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Isaiah xi. 9; Hab. ii. 14. Dear brethren, we can form at best, but a dim and shadowy conception of the blessedness to be obtained by the saints, at "the glorious appearing of the great

God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ." "We now see through a glass darkly," but when we shall behold the King in his glory, when we shall see him as he is, we shall be constrained to acknowledge, that however great the report that had reached us in his word, not one half was told of the greatness of his glory, and the blessings of his reign. Well may this blessed hope comfort and support the Lord's servants, amidst whatever trials or sufferings to which they may, for a brief season, be exposed—"their light affliction which is but for a moment, is not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in them;" they may now have sorrow, but "their sorrow shall be turned into joy;" "yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." The desire of the bridegroom is toward his mourning bride, he will come bounding on the tops of the mountains, to comfort her, to deliver her from all her adversaries, and to betroth her to himself for ever, with loving kindnesses and tender mercies.

II. I shall now consider WHO ARE THOSE ENTITLED TO LOOK FOR THE GLORIOUS APPEARING, AS A BLESSED HOPE TO THEM. He is to be revealed (as we learn in 2 Thess. i. 7, 10,) in "flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ," at the same time that he "comes to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe."—It is then his saints, his believing people, who can alone look forward, with joyful and longing hope, to the glorious appearing of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ; and none but those "who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them," who are abiding in Christ as the Lord their righteousness who has delivered them from the wrath to come, and who are living as Christ's faithful soldiers and servants here, have any reason to desire the coming of the Son of God from heaven.^a We find the apostle in the verse

that immediately follows my text, speaking of those who should be looking for this blessed hope, as redeemed from all iniquity, and purified by Jesus to himself as "a peculiar people zealous of good works." Dear brethren, unconverted sinners—all those who are workers of iniquity—all those who are living after the course of this world—all those who are neglecting the great salvation which has been already effected for them by the Saviour at his first coming—so far from looking for the second advent, or glorious appearing of the great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, as an object of hope or desire, have reason to tremble at the very mention of the subject; it is to such that the prophet Amos says, v. 18, "Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness and not light;" yes, the day of the Lord, the day of the glorious appearing of the great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, shall be a terrible day to ungodly and merely nominal professors; for they shall be "cast into outer darkness;" they shall be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." When the sign of the Son of man shall appear in the heavens, then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn and those who have despised his mercy and neglected his salvation "shall begin to call on the mountains and rocks to fall on them and hide them from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."

Dear brethren—I would ask you what would be the feelings of your minds, were the trumpet of the archangel now to sound, and were you now to behold the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven? could you, knowing in whom you had believed, lift up your heads with joy, looking for your perfect consummation and bliss both in body and soul in the presence and glory of your Lord; or would you be filled with the consternation and alarm that must in that day over-

whelm those who are conscious that they have been but dissemblers with God, and whose own hearts condemn them, as having the form of godliness, but destitute of its vital and transforming power? My unconverted hearers, take heed "lest that day come upon you unawares; for, as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." You have no time to lose—death and judgment are swiftly and certainly closing upon you; when the midnight cry is heard, it will be then too late to think of making preparation—"Now, while it is called to-day, harden not your hearts," "Seek the Lord while he may be found;" "Kiss the Son lest he be angry," while he is waiting to be gracious, before he has put on his garments of vengeance; before he has left the mercy seat, and come out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; flee into his outstretched arms, and embrace the salvation which he freely proffers and urges you to accept.

III. It now remains that I should bring before you in the last place THE INFLUENCE WHICH THIS BLESSED HOPE MUST HAVE ON ALL WHO ARE REALLY POSSESSED OF IT. We learn from the verse which immediately precedes my text, that those who are looking for this blessed hope will be found "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living soberly, righteously and godly in this present world." This agrees with what the Apostle John says (1 John, iii. 3,) where, speaking of the same hope, he adds "and every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as He is pure;" and to the same effect the Apostle Peter, addressing those whom he supposes were looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, emphatically asks "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" Dear brethren, those who are realizing, who are looking for this blessed hope, must be anxious not only to preserve

a decent exterior before man, but far more, to approve themselves to the Searcher of hearts, Rev. ii. 23, who is "ready to judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom:" to be "found of him in peace, without spot and blameless," must be the aim of those servants who are really looking for and expecting the return of their Lord. It will not be sufficient that the blood-bought saints of Christ, be found living as moral and amiable worldlings, "soberly and righteously in this present world;" they must also live *godly*—they must be manifest *even here* as the children of God, "a peculiar people zealous of good works." The first thing that our Lord represents himself as doing when he comes, having received his kingdom, is summoning his servants to an account, see Luke, xix. 11, &c.; and those who are realizing this, must, in proportion as they do so, labour that they may be accepted of and approved by him. Further, nothing I am persuaded, can raise the heart and affections from earthly things, like this hope when realized in the soul. It is the want of this that mainly produces the conformity to the world, and deadness to spiritual things that prevails to such a lamentable extent in the Church. With the declension of this hope the Church has lost sight of her true position in the world—that of waiting for the Son of God from Heaven, and only looking for her rest when her Joshua shall appear, who shall overthrow her adversaries, and shall turn her militant into her triumphant state.

Dear Christian brethren, we have no right to expect our happiness, or look for our enjoyment in this present evil world; we are left like the servants among the hostile citizens, to attend to the interests of our absent Lord—to "occupy until he comes;" and in proportion as we are faithful to our trust, and are witnesses for Christ, we must expect to suffer all that the world, the flesh and the devil can inflict upon us.

In conclusion, I would ask you, my Christian brethren, are you living in the way you would desire to be found of Jesus at his coming? Are you exercising and improving the talents committed to you; and of which you must so shortly render an account? Is your time, your property, your influence, employed in that way, that you think in your circumstances most in accordance with the will of your Lord, and most calculated to promote his glory? Is your conversation in every respect as it becometh the gospel of Christ, so as "to adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things?" Are you "mortifying your members which are upon the earth, cleansing yourselves

from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit perfecting holiness in the fear of God?" If you would be ready for that blessed event—"the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ"—if you would be free from all misgivings of mind, and have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at his coming, you must sit loosely to the things of this life, having your treasure in Heaven, standing with your loins girt and your lights burning in the attitude of watchfulness and prayer, that whensoever your Lord comes, "whether it be at evening, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning," you may be ready to receive Him *being found watching*.

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“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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REV. W. LE POER TRENCH.

Rev. C. CAULFEILD.

SALVATION BY GRACE.

A SERMON

PREACHED IN ST PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL, AT AFTERNOON SERVICE,

ON SUNDAY, 3RD OF FEBRUARY, 1839,

BY THE REV. WILLIAM LE POER TRENCH, B. D.

Rector of Killareran, Diocese of Tuam.

Acts xv. 11.

“ We believe, that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved, even as they.”

EVEN were the Gospel to be regarded *merely* as a system calculated to benefit us in our *temporal* concerns, it should arrest our attention, interest our feelings, and command our warmest admiration ; for experience, as well as revelation teaches us, that it is the fruitful source of “ whatsoever things are *true*, whatsoever things are *honest*, whatsoever things are *just*, whatsoever things are *pure*, whatsoever things are *lovely*, and whatsoever things are of *good report* ;” and consequently, so long as those social ties exist, which bind man, in a state of civilized society, to his fellow-man, so long will the Christian religion and the Gospel which teaches it, be respected, if for no other cause, at least for its practical and ameliorating effects upon the state of society at large—yes ! so long as *truth, honesty, justice, purity*, and a proper

respect for public opinion are regarded, as conducive to domestic virtue and national prosperity, so long must the Gospel be *respected*, if not loved, as the source from whence these national and domestic virtues flow in the purest, surest, and most unsullied stream.

But we do not stand here to-day to recommend the Gospel solely on account of the beauty and perfection of its ethical system, and its consequent tendency to promote the *temporal* welfare of mankind ; we are aware that it has far higher objects in view, that it addresses man not only in his social but in his spiritual capacity ; and regarding him (as in truth he is) a sinner, lying under the curse of God, it offers *salvation*, and, raising the veil that hides eternity from mortal eyes, it dispels the uncertainty and gloom that hangs about the

future, brightening the dark chambers of the tomb, and presenting a cheering prospect of eternal glory beyond the grave. It is in *this* character (as *that* grace of God which bringeth *salvation*) that we desire now to recommend the Gospel to your notice; and may that Holy Spirit, which was promised, to guide us unto all truth, enable me so to speak, and you, my brethren, to hear, that we may receive, and adorn the holy doctrine taught by the apostles of our Saviour Christ, "believing that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved even as they."

We have in these words,

1st. *A notice of the peculiar blessing of the Gospel—Salvation—"We shall be saved."*

2ndly. *The channel through which that blessing is conveyed to us—namely, "through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ;"* and,

3rdly. *We have an intimation of the extent to which that blessing reaches, "We shall be saved even as they."*

I. In the first place then, consider THE PECULIAR BLESSING OF THE GOSPEL—SALVATION.

This implies a previous state of slavery and bondage, and in this thralldom the whole human race, without distinction and without exception, are uniformly represented by the Scriptures as involved. Sin sits enthroned over a fallen and enslaved world, and man, enfeathered from the very womb, bows in abject, voluntary degradation, beneath its iron sceptre! Yea! not content with exercising an unbounded sway over both body and soul in this world, sin pursues the unrepenting sinner even beyond the grave, and, grounding its claims for future empire, upon the past exercise of power, it enlists divine justice on its side, and fixes its victim in its soul destroying grasp for ever! "All" says the Apostle Paul, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" "They are all" says the Psalmist, "*all* gone aside, they are altogether become filthy, there is none that doeth good, no not one;" "the

whole world" says St. John, "lieth in wickedness;" "the whole head is sick," says Isaiah, "and the whole heart faint, from the sole of the foot, unto the crown of the head; there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores;" in the midst of this universal corruption, over the wide expanse of this deluge of iniquity, the voice of the Eternal (re-echoed too by the conscience of the sinner) rolls in irrevocable malediction and woe—"The soul that sinneth it shall surely die," saith the Lord Almighty, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in *all* things, that are written in the book of the law to do them." And oh! is not this a bondage? is not this a yoke, from which deliverance is desirable, needful, nay, absolutely essential? Yes! and from this intolerable yoke, from this present, future, and eternal bondage, the Gospel proclaims deliverance and salvation; "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us;" and his disciples are emancipated, not only from the *guilt*, but also from the *power* of sin; "For" (says the Apostle,) "sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace." I am aware that when we thus speak of sin as bondage, and of the Gospel as liberty, we are liable to be misunderstood by some, and to be thought fanciful and visionary by others. By the great mass of mankind, the captivity of sin, is considered no captivity at all; indulging their lusts, engrossed in their worldly cares and anxieties, or pursuing the phantoms of their worldly ambition, they hug their chains, and call it liberty; but oh! these sleeping draughts of pleasure, these shadows of ambition, these dreams of wealth, are only so many delusions of Satan, to blind his votaries to their *real* interests! Heed them not my dear brethren; heed them not; they are whited sepulchres, built over a mass of putrifying corruption, and sure to fall at last and crush those who trust in them, beneath their ruins!

I say then that it is bondage, *virtual* bondage, to be the captive of sin, even though you seem to walk the earth in freedom, and freely choose the broad road that leadeth to destruction; it is bondage, *shameful* bondage, even though like galley-slaves, the victims of it, herded together in droves; it is bondage, *shameful, degrading, debasing* bondage, to be the servant of sin; even though the smiles of pleasure, the pomp of ambition, and the splendour of wealth, unite to gild and decorate the chain! Aye! bondage, from which Christ, and Christ alone, can make you free.

Come then, my dear friends, come to Christ—and you shall obtain at his hands the peculiar blessing of the Gospel, even the salvation of your souls. Come to Jesus, and continue in his word, and “ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free;” say not, as the Jews of old, “we were never in bondage to any man, how sayest thou, then ye shall be made free?” Our Saviour himself tells us, that whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin; and as we have before shown that *all* have sinned, so now we say, *all* need salvation. It matters not what is our rank, we need *salvation*; it matters not what is our occupation in life, we need *salvation*; it matters not what are our mental acquirements, we need *salvation*; it matters not what is our character before men, we can have but one character in the sight of God—that of sinners, sinners who need *salvation*! Oh! then, let us seek (under a deep conviction of this, our great need) for the peculiar blessing of the Gospel, even the salvation of our souls: let us thankfully accept the proffered mercy of our God, and let us “take the cup of *salvation* and call upon the name of the Lord.”

Having thus noticed the peculiar blessing of the Gospel, namely, *salvation*, and having attempted, in some degree to exhibit our need of it; I shall now proceed to consider,

II. THE CHANNEL THROUGH WHICH THIS BLESSING IS CONVEYED TO US, NAMELY, “THROUGH THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.”

Salvation, my dear hearers, is *not* the reward of merit, but the *gift* of grace; not the purchase of man’s desert, but the unearned bounty of God’s *free favor*; “By grace are ye saved, through faith;” “As sin hath reigned unto death, even so, grace reigns through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.” Yes! blessed be God, he has not left mankind, as he did the fallen angels, who kept not their first estate, to reap the wages of their sin, in hopeless, cheerless, comfortless despair; but by the unearned, unmerited, and undeserved love, wherewith he loved the world, he planned, proclaimed, and perfected salvation, for the meanest and most guilty of mankind. True, we are shut up in sin, even from our mother’s womb; true, we are conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity; true, we are both by nature and by practice, obnoxious to God’s vengeance; “being by nature the children of wrath,” and by practice, “fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind;” but still, strange as it may seem, wonderful as it may seem, paradoxical as it may seem! the most guilty of the human race, is offered salvation *freely*, by God’s grace, through “the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” But, as it is freely offered, so, must it be freely accepted. No unbelieving doubts and hesitation, on account of the magnitude of the gift, and our own unworthiness to receive it—no murmurings (in the pride of our intellect) at imaginary defects, which our mole-eyed wisdom may *fancy* it discovers in the plan—no Pharisaical standing-out upon conditions, which, if required, could never be fulfilled—but, a humbling sense of our own unworthiness, coupled with a grateful sense of God’s undeserved mercy—a laying of the hand upon the mouth, and the mouth in the dust, and a crying before him, unclean! unclean! And a

believing, confiding, grateful acceptance of salvation, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; he and he alone, is "the way, and the truth, and the life, and no man cometh to the Father, but by him," and so long as this simple announcement forms part of the inspired record, so long will a self-righteous dependence on our own efforts end in our condemnation; and a self-loathing trust in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, terminate in our salvation. Grace, free grace shines conspicuous throughout the whole plan of man's salvation from first to last; it was grace that planned the remedy, ere yet the disease was felt; it is grace that renders that remedy effectual, "through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth"—the foundation stone of God's spiritual temple, the church, was hewn out by grace; by grace all the members of that church are, as lively stones, built into a spiritual temple unto the Lord, and when the whole edifice shall be perfected, and shall stand forth in all its fair and just proportions, the head-stone thereof shall be brought forth with shoutings, crying, grace! grace! unto it. Proud and unhumiliated men will, doubtless, be offended at this, and, rejecting salvation as a gift, will endeavour to earn it as a reward, by seeking to establish *some* distinction between themselves and more scandalous, or it may be, only more vulgar sinners; but this is all labour in vain;—it has pleased Almighty God to pronounce on the one hand, that "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight;" and on the other, that man is "saved by grace through faith;" and whatever the self-righteous Pharisee, or the infidel Sadducee, may object to the contrary; salvation through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, is the *only* salvation recognized in the Bible; the only salvation that will either exalt the *holiness*, vindicate the *justice*, and magnify the *mercy* of the Divine Being, or speak peace to the

sinner's conscience, and assure him of acceptance with his God.

The Apostle Paul (Rom. iii.) asserts, that this mode of salvation was expressly adopted by God, in order to manifest his own attributes of righteousness, justice, and forbearing love, it "being set forth" (as the apostle declares,) "to manifest the forbearance of God in the remission of sins, and to declare his righteousness, that he might be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Where then is the force of that infidel reasoning, which grounds its rejection of salvation through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, on its supposed contrariety to the attributes of God? Where is the boast of the Pharisee, that salvation through grace is inimical to the moral precepts of the law? "*Do* we then make void the law through faith? God forbid! Yea! we *establish* the law." But here I must say a word, as to the *way* in which the Lord Jesus Christ effected this salvation for his people.

This he did, by taking upon him their nature, becoming their substitute, and undertaking to answer for their sins.—He who "thought it not robbery to be equal with God, emptied himself of his glory, took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross;" thus he suffered for sins—"the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." And this he did as the sinner's substitute, for "all we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on *him*, the iniquity of us all. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes, we are healed." Yes! the vicarious sacrifice of the Son of God forms a peculiar and distinctive feature of the Christian religion; remove it, and all the other awakening and comforting

truths of God's Word would fall to the ground along with it; the corruption of the human heart, the love, the wonderful love of God to sinners, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the renewing, and life-giving operations of the Holy Spirit; all the threatenings that would withdraw the sinner from sin, all the truths that would win him to his God; all the promises that would comfort him amid the various changes and chances of this mortal life; and all the hopes that shine around his future prospects; all! all would fade away! into a dim, dark, doubtful obscurity; and leave Christianity as cold, as cheerless, and as hopeless, as the unsatisfactory speculations of the ancient heathen philosophy: but it cannot, ought not, must not, be lost sight of thus. No! no! the vicarious atonement made upon the cross, is the foundation which God himself has laid, and we *know* that "the foundation of God standeth sure." It was decreed from eternity in the counsels of the triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, were alike pledged for its security; it was announced at the gates of Eden as the charter of man's salvation; and when it was perfected upon the cross, a glorious immortality was sealed for ever to all who believe.

But a word as to the way in which this salvation is *applied* to the sinner's soul. This is through the operations of the Holy Spirit; it is peculiarly his office, to "take of the things of Christ, and to show them unto us;" to direct the understanding, enlighten the conscience, interest the affections, and thus influence the will. Thus our Saviour Christ comforts his disciples, under the prospect of his approaching sufferings, by the promise of the Holy Ghost; "When he the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will show you things to come: he shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you."

Such, then, is the peculiar blessing of the Gospel. A salvation altogether of grace, decreed by the grace of God the Father, wrought out by the grace of God the Son, and applied and rendered effectual by the grace of God the Holy Ghost. Yes! We believe that "through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved."

III. Let us now consider, in the last place, the intimation which is given in the text, of THE EXTENT TO WHICH THIS BLESSED SALVATION REACHES; "WE SHALL BE SAVED, EVEN AS THEY." In order rightly to estimate the full force of these words, it will be necessary to examine briefly the context in which they stand. It appears that certain Judaizing teachers, who had gone down from Jerusalem to Antioch, had endeavoured to pervert the infant church in that place, by mixing up the doctrine of justification by works, with the doctrine of salvation through "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ:" teaching the brethren, that except they placed themselves under the yoke and bondage of the law, they could not be saved. Paul and Barnabas however, who were at that time at Antioch, steadfastly *opposed* the errors of these people; but not having, in themselves, sufficient authority to decide the question, it was referred to the apostles and elders assembled in council at Jerusalem. They accordingly came together to consider of the matter, and after much discussion, we are told that Peter stood up, and reminded the brethren, how God (through his instrumentality) had dealt with believing Gentiles in the case of the conversion of Cornelius and his household; that on that occasion, God himself had manifested his acceptance of the Gentiles by miraculously pouring out upon them the gift of the Holy Spirit, simply on their *believing*; and that even the apostles and elders themselves, who had been born Jews, looked for acceptance in no other way,—“But we believe” (he says in the words of the text,)

"that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved even as they."

From this we gather the universal applicability of the gospel salvation; there is no longer any national distinction between Jew and Gentile, between Greek and barbarian, between bond and free. But "the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him." Our commission, as ministers of the gospel, is as extensive as the globe on which we live. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," is the divine command, and to every individual of the human race is the word of this salvation sent. We can carry it to the Greenlander, who builds his habitation amid the everlasting snows, and equally can we offer it to the African, who pants beneath the more sultry suns of tropical climes. The civilized inhabitant of Europe, and the wandering Arab of the desert—the luxurious and effeminate Asiatic, and the hardy and robust Indian of the west, are alike embraced within its comprehensive grasp; and to every nation under heaven we can go and say, "repent, and believe the gospel," and "we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, you shall be saved." And this is true also of the various degrees of *affliction* and of *crime*. The cold and formal moralist—the half repentant, hesitating, occasional transgressor—and the unblushing, hardened, abandoned sinner, are each and all interested in this "grace of God that bringeth salvation." Go to the hospitals of disease, visit the various abodes of affliction, penury, and crime. Let one be found, (if it were possible) on whose head were heaped all the woes that have been experienced, and all the crimes that have been committed since the days of Adam until now, and we do not hesitate to assert that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is *sufficient* to comfort even such an one, under all his afflictions, and to cleanse him from all his sin. God forbid that we

should dare to limit the grace and mercy of Christ, or set bounds to his free and unsearchable love. Oh! No, "He is able to save to the uttermost, all that come unto God by him." "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Yes! the afflicted may look up from the midst of his griefs—the prisoner may attend from his dungeon—and the malefactor may hearken from the very gibbet; and if they believe our message, they may one and all adopt the language of the text as the charter of their salvation, and say, "We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved even as they."

Such, dear friends, I conceive to be the scope and import of the text. You have seen that it leads the mind to reflect upon the peculiar blessing of the gospel, even the salvation of the soul; that it points out the channel through which that blessing is conveyed to us, namely, through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ; and, lastly, that it intimates that that blessing is equally needed and equally applicable to all, high and low, rich and poor, "Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free."

And now let me ask, have you ever reflected upon your *own* want of this salvation? have you ever *felt* sin as a burden, and sighed after deliverance from it as for liberty? Have you ever thought of the danger of trusting to your own works for salvation, and refusing to accept it through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ? Some there *may* be, even among my present hearers, who either disregard or dissent from the doctrines we have been attempting to establish—and to such I would now address myself. Look, my fellow sinners, look at that glorious, happy, ransomed assembly which surround the throne of the eternal God. Look at that "great multitude which no man can number, saved out of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, which

are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple"—Do you expect to join that ransomed host, to share their glory, and partake their bliss? Do you hope to be saved even as *they*? Then must *you* seek salvation through the same channel through which *they* obtained it; *they* sought salvation through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ; *they* "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb;" and be assured, dear friends, and I say it as one who shall hereafter give account to God for every word he utters here this day,—be assured that unless you believe that "through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ you shall be saved," *you* never can be saved, "even as *they*." I pray you, therefore, not to rush into the presence of your God with the filthy robes of your own imagined righteousness upon you; that would be sure to provoke the startling inquiry, "Friend, how camest *thou* in hither, not having on a wedding garment?" But re-

nounce all dependance upon *self*, trust *only* in the free mercy of your God; believe "that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ you shall be saved," and you shall enter into the joy of your Lord. I trust, however, that a large proportion of my present hearers *have* thus been led to seek and to obtain salvation through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Well, brethren! by the grace of God you are what you are; take heed, therefore, that his grace, which is in you, be not in vain, but see that you labour more abundantly than all those who have so much of good works in their *mouths*, and so very few of them in their *lives*. Remember, dear brethren, that the eye of the world, as well as the eye of God, is upon you, and inasmuch as "ye are the light of the world," so let your light shine that the darkness of the world around you may be enlightened, and sinners be led, through your instrumentality, to trust in the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SERMON.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN CHRIST CHURCH, CORK,

BY THE REV. CHARLES CAULFEILD, A.M.

Vicar of Kilcock, and Domestic Chaplain to the Earl of Charlemont.

ISAIAH, lii, 7.

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good; that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth.”

THE Word of God, communicated by the voice of his holy apostles and prophets, brings tidings of mercy and forgiveness. This communication is the free gift of God, flowing from his unbounded love. Man would have imagined that if a message came from the throne of a pure and holy God to a fallen and guilty world, that it would have told of wrath and woe, of the speedy vengeance of an offended God; but “God’s ways are not man’s ways, nor God’s thoughts, man’s thoughts: as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God’s ways higher than man’s ways, and God’s thoughts than man’s thoughts.” When he spake to his fallen and sinful creatures, it was not in a voice of wrath and terror, but of pardon and peace. The only knowledge which we can have of this mighty God “in whom we live, and move, and have our being,” before whose dread tribunal we must stand when the pilgrimage of life is over, must be received from that revelation of his will, which in mercy he has communicated to us; and in that word, all that is needful for man to know regarding his comfort here and everlasting peace hereafter, is fully revealed; so that the language of the 6th Article of our church, is fully borne out by the blessed experience of every believing child of God—“The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, or may not be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.” Now this revelation, God requires that his people should be ac-

quainted with; he has not given and wonderfully preserved it, that his people should neglect and despise it. We must acquaint ourselves with him, before we can be at peace—with that way of acceptance whereby, though our “sins be as scarlet, they may be made white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they may be as wool.”

If the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ be hid, the apostle informs us, “it is hid to them that are lost,” whom the God of the world blinds; and if it be a legitimate conclusion from this statement of St. Paul, that those ignorant of the Gospel of Christ perish, what an awful prospect does it open before us, of the ruined and hopeless state of the hundred of millions of the heathen by whom we are surrounded!—“bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh,” yet “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world!” If the one and only way of acceptance before God, if the only fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness be unknown, and the great majority of our fellow-creatures live and die ignorant of the way of salvation, surely we may say with the ancient prophet, in the contemplation of the awful state to which man has been reduced by Satan, “Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!”

The object of the Society, in whose behalf it is my privilege to address you this day—the CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY—is, to make known the salvation of God to

those nations of the earth, that sit in darkness, and the valley of the shadow of death, to send forth among them, heralds of divine love and mercy, testifying of peace on earth to man,—peace, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, and “glory to God in the highest;” to tell the wondrous tidings, “that God is just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus;” that “mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.” How precious is the thought, that notwithstanding the vastness of the promises of God, notwithstanding their exceeding greatness, in his own good and appointed time, he will assuredly fulfil them all, heaven and earth may pass away—yea they shall pass away—but one jot or tittle of that which God hath promised, cannot fail of its fulfilment. All that God hath spoken he will fully accomplish. In the bringing to pass, that which he has determined, God uses instruments, weak and feeble in themselves, each efficient to perform that which he has ordained; he uses men as his instruments in making known his Gospel, the feeble potsherds of the earth, to testify of everlasting glory, and Christ’s redeeming love; and he makes them efficient to the salvation of many souls. So also we may look on this Society, as one of the many instruments, highly honored in this instrumentality, for the diffusion of the knowledge of a Saviour’s love, and the preparing, and making ready the way of the Son of God, that at his second coming to judge the world, a people may be found acceptable before him.

1.—The primary meaning of that portion of the Word of God, to which your attention is now more immediately directed, deserves consideration for a few moments. In reading the Word of God, we lose much of the force and beauty of many of its passages, if we are ignorant of the circumstances under which they were written, and those of the individuals to whom they were addressed. The passage which forms our text, is supposed to refer to the sending forth the heralds of the conquering Persian to proclaim liberty to the Jews that groaned under captivity in Babylon—“thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me, and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

Who is there among you of all his people? His God, be with him, and let him go up.” In order fully to understand the joy and gladness which such a proclamation as this, must necessarily bring to the poor Jew mourning in captivity, we must have some conception of their condition, and the feelings that swelled in their hearts during that period of degradation and suffering. Of this, some idea may be formed, from the lamentations of Jeremiah, which speak the language of the believing Israelite, mourning over the fall of Zion—“Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me, in the day of his fierce anger:” and again in the 137th Psalm, we find the captive Jews, thus describing their bitter sorrows, “By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down; yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion;” the insulting language of the conqueror is next described; “For they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.” Here is the language of sorrow under deep affliction: here we find yearning of heart for the glorious land of promise, which God chose out of all nations of the earth for his peculiar people; mourning in slavery, dragged from their happy home, and much loved country, at the proud chariot wheels of their triumphant conqueror! Place for a moment before your view, one of the nobles or princes of Zion, a slave, a captive, doomed to toil day after day, on the banks of the river Chebar, gathering around him the evening his little ones; and as his heart swells, and the tear trembles in his eye, at his present degradation, and the ruin and misery of his house—telling them of the fertile fields and grassy slopes of Canaan, of the rich possessions once their own—and the marble palaces in which their fathers dwelt—of gushing streams, and vine clad hills—of the mighty things that God had done amongst them in ancient days—of the beauty of

Jerusalem, surrounded with the everlasting hills—of the glory of the temple of the Lord:—conceive him thus engaged, while he looks forth from his hut of reeds, on the unwholesome marshes along the banks of the Chebar, and while thus employed, he starts at the blast of the brazen trumpets that strikes upon his ear; he leaps up, and rushes forth, and the joyful tidings contained in the proclamation of Cyrus, falls upon his astonished ear, he hears it indeed with joy—excessive joy almost overpowers him, and he can scarcely comprehend the intelligence; at length in all its full and happy truth, he receives the message; he stands no longer a slave but a freeman, not only free, but restored again to his long forsaken but much loved home—again to stand in the hall of his fathers, to take his place among the princes of Israel, to bow before the Lord, and worship Jehovah on the hill of Zion! This may give us some faint idea, of the joy which the message of Cyrus brought to the captive Jew, beautiful, indeed, on the mountains were the feet of those who carried such joyful tidings.

Even as the prophet Isaiah foretold, this deliverance came to the people of God, great and sudden; but God had promised, and he surely brought it to pass. In vain the might and power of Babylon interposed; in vain her lofty walls and brazen gates stood forth, towering to heaven, and to all appearance, invincible in strength; when the day and hour came for the deliverance of the Israel of God, the might and power of Babylon was like the dust of the summer threshing floor, and passed away before the breath of Jehovah. The vast and noble river was dried up, the brazen gates were burst, and the blood-stained soldiers of the conquering Persian, like a fiery flood of wrath, burst into the palace of the fallen and defenceless king of Babylon; and the dominion and empire of Babylon fell for ever, even in one hour, because the day for the redemption of Israel was fully come.

2.—But if this passage had a meaning full of hope and comfort to the believing Israelite when in captivity, we are warranted by the Apostle St. Paul, who quotes this passage as applicable to the preaching of the Gospel, by those whom the risen and triumphant Saviour, victorious over death and hell, sent forth with this com-

mand, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." It has therefore a secondary fulfilment, far more glorious and extensive, in the sending forth those who shall preach good tidings of salvation to all the ends of the earth; and the message thus conveyed has an analogy with that proclaimed by the heralds of Cyrus; for it bears to man—fallen and degraded, the captive of sin, fast bound in slavish chains—the tidings of deliverance, "Captivity is led captive," and at the sounding forth the trumpet of the Gospel, the chains fall from the hand of the slave of Satan, and the doors of the dark prison house are thrown open to him, and he hears the joyful sound. Although an alien from his home, and far away from Canaan, the blowing of the trumpet of the Gospel, tells of restoration to the forfeited inheritance. It proclaims a full and yet the only mode of deliverance to enslaved man; the only mode of reconciliation with an offended God; the one only way of justification before Him; for "there is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we can be saved."

The state, then, of the multitude of the heathen as beings responsible before God, with immortal souls, formed for an eternity of happiness or woe, and yet ignorant of this message of pardon and peace, should excite our earnest attention, and rouse our warmest sympathies. We are not to judge their state hereafter, by our own hopes or expectations of the manner in which God shall deal with them; or how they may be justified before him, to whom they have to answer: we can only tell what God hath spoken. He tells us, "That the imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil continually," that the nations ignorant of the Saviour, "dwell in the land of the shadow of death," that saints and faithful in Christ Jesus at Ephesus were, when heathens, "dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in times past ye walked, according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," that were, when thus led by nature, "the children of wrath even as others." Now, the state of men, ignorant of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus, differs nothing in the present day, from that of those who were alive, when the

Apostle wrote. To the same God who is unchangeable, and before the same dread tribunal, must they give an account for the deeds done in the body, whether they be good, or whether they be evil.

3.—The mode which God has been pleased to appoint for making the joyful sound known to man, is by the preaching of the word of God by his fellow man. The Lord might command the angelic host that stand around him in glory, those ministers of his will, who rejoice to do his pleasure, to convey from shore to shore, and from pole to pole, the glad tidings of pardon and mercy—and ten thousand times ten thousand would spring forth to obey the glad command. The everlasting Gospel might be written with a sunbeam on the sky, that all earth might behold it; but such did not seem good in his sight, who is infinitely wise; and God hath taught us in compassion to our weakness, why he has not thus acted, “we have this treasure in earthen vessels,” says the apostle, “that the excellency of the power might be of God and not of us.” The decree of Cyrus which gave liberty to the nation of Israel might, if it had been rolled up, and laid aside in the archives of the palace of Babylon, have become quite ineffective: until the tidings it conveyed were made known, the captive Israelite could not avail himself of the freedom which it conferred. What punishment, think you, would the officers of the generous king have deserved at his hands, had they kept back, or concealed from Israel, the decree which gave them deliverance? You will immediately denounce against them the severest penalty that could be inflicted, if they had thus rendered ineffective the mercy of their king. I charge that same crime on the professing Christian nations of Europe and America. Their king, even the king of kings, hath issued a decree, proclaiming “liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound,” proclaiming life, and glory to the believing and penitent child of man; and this heavenly decree has been kept back, concealed, and rendered of no effect, by those who profess to be his servants, to whom he entrusted it, and to whom he gave commandment to publish it to all nations.

The labours of the various societies, which have sprung up, having for their object the spreading abroad the knowledge

of a Saviour's love, within the last fifty years—many of them much more recently—affords a proof that at length after a sleep of centuries, the professing people of God have awakened to a sense of their responsibility, and the obligation under which they lie, to fulfil this plain, simple, unrepealed command of the Saviour to his people. Among these societies stands forth the *Church Missionary Society*, not the least either in the extent of its operations, or the blessings it has been made the instrument of conferring. If we attempt a brief survey of its various missions and stations, we must take a circuit of the globe:—we must pass from the frozen regions of North America, where the indians dwell “amid the thrilling regions of the thick ribbed ice;” where we could show you, on the sabbath-day, three churches crowded with worshippers, and drinking in, from the lips of their pastors, the glad tidings of salvation; to the burning and pestilential shores of Western Africa,—the earliest scene of the Society's labours:—here we could point out to your observation the liberated negro, not long since thrown forth an outcast on the shore, scarcely elevated above the beast of the field, a thoughtless shouting savage, now changed into an orderly and devout worshipper of the God of Heaven. We could show you above three thousand little children, taught to sing the praises of redeeming love, and trained up according to the apostolic precept, “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” We must then take you along the classic shores of the Mediterranean, and the smiling islands of the Greek Archipelago, and ask you to sail with us up the broad stream of the Nile, and view the operations of the Society among the ancient Coptic church in Egypt and Abyssinnia; and the followers of the false Prophet of Mecca, by whom they are surrounded. We must then pass over the rich plains and fertile vallies of Hindoostan, whose teeming millions call aloud, “come over and help us!” Here the Society has three missions established, Northern, Western, and Southern India, where the native population have begun to throw their idols to the moles and the bats, and to view with horror and loathing the blood-stained and soul-polluting rites of their false gods. Their worship is full of abomination, that could not be repressed, and the altars of

their idols are defiled with human blood. They call for help to the Christians of Europe; they ask for heralds of mercy, to proclaim glad tidings; but alas, they call in vain! Oh Lord! awaken a missionary spirit in the hearts of thy people at home. Verily we are guilty concerning the blood of our brethren; we see the anguish of their souls, and yet we have no pity. Lord pardon us! Oh Lord, forgive the coldness and deadness of our hearts!

From India we must pass on to Ceylon, perhaps the loveliest land in all the earth that the sun beholds when he runs his race of glory; a land of hills and vallies, of forests and mountains, of lakes and rivers, a glorious and beautiful land, where—

“All save the spirit of man is divine.”

Yet even here, amid the thick gloom and almost palpable darkness that broods over the moral horizon, a few gleams of joyous light burst forth, a few beams of mercy from the sun of righteousness enlighten the surrounding darkness. Here are Christian churches and congregations; and the poor blind idolater has been taught to know that “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.” Turning from this land of loveliness, we must spread our sail and visit the missionary settlements in Australia; where man, once formed in the image of God, appears in the lowest state of degradation, scarcely endowed with an idea beyond his instinctive wants. Again, on the shores of the blood-stained and cannibal New Zealand we can point to the victory of the cross over heathen darkness; and can show, on the sabbath-day, the rising generation assembled, and reading in their own tongue, the wonderful works of God. We can show the savage warrior, casting aside his blood-polluted war club, and sitting down at the feet of the missionary, to be instructed in “the things which belong to his everlasting peace.” On the shores of South-eastern Africa the heralds of heavenly love have gone forth: amid its hills and vallies an effort has been made to plant the standard of the cross, and sound abroad the silver trumpet of the gospel. Where the myriads of China swarm, where man is found highly civilized, yet ignorant of the God that made him, a messenger of peace has been despatched by our Society. We trust that the hearts of God’s faithful people at home may be awakened, and

that one great prevailing cry of intercession may burst forth from the whole universal church before the throne of God, that he may be pleased in his mercy to open a safe and effectual door for the introduction of the Gospel to the long, long neglected millions of China. And now, sweeping more than half round the globe, again we come to the luxuriant and beautiful islands of the West Indies; where, under the sanction of the bishops there established, the Society has entered on an important field of labour. Intense, indeed, is the desire of the liberated negro for instruction, and God has been pleased to endow those once degraded and oppressed children of Africa, with a quick and lively intelligence; an earnest desire is manifested among them for instruction, and they only require those who can teach them.

Such are the missions, which, over the face of the whole earth, the Society has been able to occupy, and these are carried on under the superintendence of sixty-eight English clergymen, and eleven Lutheran and five native Christian clergymen. There are about four hundred and sixty catechists and schoolmasters, who conduct four hundred and forty schools, containing above *twenty-one thousand scholars*; and about twenty thousand attend public worship in the various places which have been opened for that purpose. When we consider these things, we may well say, “What hath God wrought?” all this mighty work achieved in the space of thirty-eight years, the greater portion within the last twenty years! and yet this is nothing compared with that which remains to be done.—There is room for a thousand times such an increase, and room for a thousand fold more would remain; and yet the brethren are all crying out,—one universal call comes from India, and Africa, from China, and America, and from the South Seas,—“come over and help us!”—And why do not the Society respond to this call? Alas! the answer they are with sorrow compelled to give, is, “we have not men who are willing to go, we have not the means to send them.” The truly good and great man who is at the head of the Christian church in Northern India, as its bishop, lately wrote to the Society, saying, that a great and effectual door lay open for the introduction of the Gospel into Northern India; that the old religion

or superstitions of the country were tottering to their fall, that the heathen were beginning to inquire concerning this new religion, and that if a thousand missionaries were sent out, they would be welcomed with open arms in every part of Northern India. The appeal was made, the above intelligence, this important invitation, was circulated among the four-and-twenty thousand professing Christians of Great Britain, and what was the result? Five hundred preachers went forth? alas, not one hundred! Did fifty hear the call and go forth? Did twenty? did ten? did five? *Not even five!* Alas, alas! the hearts of the professing people of God at home are cold and dead. Yet the heathen are daily perishing, "the harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he may send forth labourers into his harvest."

The message sent by these ministers of the King of heaven is worthy of a God of holiness and love, and must be received, (for there is no other mode by which it is possible to receive it) *by faith*. It is truly joyful news, "glad tidings of great joy," telling of pardon and forgiveness to man on earth, consistent with God's glory in heaven; joyful tidings—for they are suited to man's understanding, simple and plain, easily comprehended, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." It tells man that though he has sold himself, and become the slave of sin and death, that Christ can make him free, that it was for this purpose he was anointed of God, "to preach good tidings unto the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted;" that though he is polluted and unholy, "the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin;" that this glorious salvation, that this fulness of glory thus promised, is freely given to all who seek it, that every longing heart and parched tongue may freely drink of the water of life. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat, yea, come buy wine and milk, without money and without price." Like the prophet Baptist on the banks of the Jordan, it is the high privilege of the preacher of the everlasting Gospel, to direct the inquiring soul to lift her eye of faith, and "behold the Lamb of

God that taketh away the sins of the world." This message is very glorious, opening up to the eye of the believer, the glimpse of the kingdom of heaven, the rich and fertile fields, the gushing streams, and waving palms, of the heavenly Canaan—the ransomed and redeemed of the Lord, an innumerable multitude whom no man could number, having golden crowns upon their heads, standing before the throne of God. Yes, blessed be God, though man be vile and sinful, God "hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him:" yes, "the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all," and though in that day "the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found."

As in ancient times the servants of God, by faith received the promises, so now this people by the same instrumentality, are made partakers of his grace. Of the noble company, who each in their day and generation, adorned, on earth, the doctrine of God their Saviour, mentioned in the 11th of Heb. it is affirmed "these all died in faith." Now, "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." and how can they hear without preachers? our simple object is to send forth to the heathen, those who will testify unto them of the grace of God. And now let us look above—by the eye of faith, we may behold the throne of the Lamb, the company of his redeemed people around him, they are gathered from all nations, and among them stand many who first heard of the efficacy of a Saviour's blood, of God's pardoning love, of the Spirit's sanctifying influence, from the lips of the poor, humble, struggling missionary.

Many instances of the power of divine grace, triumphing over the darkness and pollution of idolatry, might be mentioned; but one instance of triumphant faith in death will be at present sufficient—it was after a day of missionary toil, at Broughton chapel, that Mr. Davis was requested to visit a dying native in the neighbourhood: he found him lying in a verandah, covered with a dirty garment, and resting his head on a mat rolled up as a pillow. He was an old man, his beard was grey, he was fully tatooed, his countenance had been remarkably fine, but it was becoming

fixed in death—he knelt over him with deep feelings of regret and sorrow. Surely, he thought, this poor man's glass is run out, and he is about to appear in the presence of God, alas! alas! what could then be done for him! he spoke to him; the dying savage tried to speak, but was unable—at length his eye, that was glaring in death, brightened, the muscles of his lips relaxed, he raised his feeble arm, and letting it fall on his breast, he exclaimed, "my mind is fixed upon Christ as my Saviour." "How long," cried the missionary in astonishment, "have you been seeking Christ?" "from the first," he replied, "Christ is in my heart, and my soul is joyful." He requested him to keep a firm hold of Christ; he said, "I have no fear, Christ is with me." The missionary read part of the 14th of John, and prayed with him; he told him how he blessed God for having sent messengers with the message of salvation, that he was dying, and longed to be with Christ. "Oh," said he, "I shall die to-day, this is the sacred day." Here was a poor bloodstained, murderous idolater, changed by the grace of God, and enabled, filled with lively and triumphant faith, to take up the language of the sweet Psalmist of Israel and say, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me;" "many shall come from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south; and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God." Oh who can tell, or who can count the value of one immortal soul? the sun that shines in glory, and "comes forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber, and rejoice as a giant to run his course," shall sink in darkness and fade away; but the immortal soul of man shall endure for ever; the salvation of one soul, bought and redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, would a thousandfold repay all the toil, the labour, and expense of the Society. The number brought to a knowledge of Christ the Lord, as the Saviour of sinners, by the preaching of those sent forth by this Society, will be fully known "in that day when the Lord of Hosts shall make up his jewels."

5.—We have also brought before us in this passage of the Word of God, the important truth, that the character of the

preacher should correspond with his message, that he should show forth in his life and conversation, that the glorious tidings he was commissioned to convey to others, had been received by himself, and the incorruptible seed of the Word sown in the heart, had produced the fruits corresponding in life. In all periods of the church of Christ, and in all places, this has been necessary, in order that the tidings borne may have their full and blessed effect; but above all things it is necessary, especially among the heathen—there above all places—the preacher of the Gospel should shine as a light in a dark place, should stand forth, so separated from the pollutions, the many and unutterable pollutions of heathenism, and all the defilements and abominations of idolatry; that those who behold him may take note of him that he has been with Jesus. Oh, pray then that the feet of the missionaries in foreign lands may be beautiful in holiness and love. None can tell the trials and sorrows, the temptations and struggles, of the missionary, save those who have stood on the missionary field, when in the midst of storm and conflict, he essays to plant the standard of the cross in an enemy's country! How can he hope to stand—"without are fightings, and within are fears?" He can only stand by looking continually unto Christ his Saviour, "who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God;" by looking continually and steadfastly unto the end of his earthly race, and having "his conversation in heaven." Much injury has arisen to the cause of the Gospel, from the inconsistent life of its preachers; the devil and the world are ever on the watch, and seize with eagerness, on the slightest deviation from the straight path of rectitude in the child of God. May the knowledge of this fact keep us more and more watchful, lest we bring discredit on the truth that we profess, and do dishonor to Christ our Saviour; and make us more earnest in our prayers, that aid may be afforded to our brethren in heathen lands, exposed to severe and peculiar temptation; that God may keep them safe, "that the everlasting arms may be underneath them," and that they may "hear a voice behind them, saying, this is the way, walk ye in it, when they turn to the right hand or when they turn to the left."

Great difficulty, as may be conceived, has been found in procuring properly qualified men, to undertake the duty of missionaries, and perhaps the more peculiarly suited a child of God may be for this important and particular sphere of duty, the less he is conscious of his fitness. If a detail were made of the necessary qualifications of those who would seek to glorify God in this part of his vineyard, the most experienced servant of God would be found to shrink back from the responsibility. Fervent piety, great zeal, an holy boldness and courage in the Christian warfare, unblemished purity of life and heart, with deepened, sincere humility, and self abasement, are some of the leading requisites in him, who would head the forlorn hope (shall we call it,) in the combat of the armies of God. Oh, then pray that zealous, able, faithful men, may be raised up to go forth to the missionary work—men who, like the apostle of old, can say in the contemplation of sufferings, reproaches, and shame, “But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry that I have received of the Lord, that I may fulfil it.”

Having thus considered the message alluded to in our text, and the mode appointed for making it known, with the character of the bearer of these joyful tidings, let us briefly consider—

II. THE AUTHORITY ON WHICH THIS PROCLAMATION IS MADE. It was the conqueror of Babylon, the victorious Persian, that gave liberty to the captive Jews; it is the conqueror of death and hell, the risen and triumphant Saviour, the God who reigns in Zion, the King of Kings, who gave commandment that the Gospel—glad tidings of great joy—should be proclaimed to all people. “All power is given unto him in heaven and in earth,” and by virtue of that power committed to Immanuel, pardon and forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to every creature. Sound, sound abroad, then, these glorious tidings,—let the earth, the sea, and the everlasting hills take up the joyful strain, and cry aloud and shout—Salvation! salvation to the fallen and guilty child of Adam’s sinful race! Redemption’s work is done! The Lord shall be king over the whole earth; he reigns now as a king in the hearts of his believing people, and this

spiritual kingdom began to be established here in the days of John the Baptist; and it is set up on earth wherever the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is preached faithfully, and joyfully received. True, the kingdom is yet small, and the band apparently feeble, but the Lord of Hosts is with them, the God of Jacob is their refuge; his word is pledged, and his power exercised for their preservation and deliverance, and “He will guide them by his counsel, and afterwards will receive them into glory.”

In faith and hope we look for the extension of this kingdom; we know that Christ shall have the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost part of the earth for his possession—“That the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea;” and we believe that in extending the field of missionary labours, we, however feeble and unworthy, are preparing the way for that glorious display of the power of Jehovah. All the prophets tell of these blessed times; all, with one harmonious voice, conclude their inspired songs by telling of man redeemed from sin and death; and that long expected day, when the name of the Lord shall be known from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, and when “the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients, gloriously.”

Have you, my brethren, heard these glorious tidings contained in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus? Have you by faith received them, and made them your own? Have they brought to you the deliverance foretold, freedom from the condemnation, the love, the power of sin? or are you still in bondage? the slave of Satan, “the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience?” If you follow the practice, or love the indulgence of sin, you cannot be the servants of Christ, made free by his Spirit, from the law of sin and death. Corruption may struggle in the breast of the child of God, and pollute his holiest services; but he loathes and abhors sin, and is thus free from its prevailing power, so that it has not dominion over him. Search, then, and try whose subject you are, and whom you obey; ascertain if you have come out from the pollution of a world that lieth in wickedness, and are growing in grace and the

knowledge of the love of Christ your Saviour; and thereby progressively becoming more and more "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light;" and, finally, remember that the citizens of Christ's kingdom are a loyal people, that they believe in, obey, and love their king.

How glorious is the Gospel! How exceedingly precious the promises of God! Even as by the eye of faith we now behold the Saviour, crowned in glory, so we shall see him eye to eye, and face to face. Yes, "every eye shall see him!" but in that day one immense shout shall burst from the lips of his victorious people. "Lo! this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

In conclusion, I commit the cause of the Church Missionary Society to your prayers and your consideration. If you value the Gospel of the Lord Jesus for yourself, if you have experienced in your own soul its saving power and holy influence, you will be more anxious to extend its blessings to the poor benighted heathen. The principle of the Gospel is expansive; it embraces the world. All can aid in this glorious work! Are there any here who will go forth, who, not counting "houses or lands, father or mother, brethren or sisters, dear unto them," will go forth and engage in this work of faith and labour of love? Oh that God would awaken a spirit of tender pity in the hearts of his people for the perishing heathen! Will you aid us by your prayers? The Lord himself hath taught us to pray for the extension of his kingdom, that his name may be hallowed, that his kingdom may come, that his will may be done on earth as it is in heaven. Let me intreat, then, that when you bow your knees before the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, on the Sabbath morn-

or evening, in social or private prayer, that the cause of the missionary may not be forgotten; that God would bless, and support, and comfort them in their arduous warfare. Again, give us your countenance and support; and in order that you may do so effectually, make yourself acquainted with the details of the Society, and the particulars of their operations in the various stations established among the heathen; and the more you investigate the transactions of the Society, I am safe in affirming, the more they will meet your approbation and deserve your encouragement. Again, you may aid us by your wealth, by giving to the spread of his Gospel a portion of that abundance which God hath bestowed upon you, by dedicating to his service, freely and cheerfully, part of your property, remembering that "God loveth a cheerful giver."

Is it necessary that I should speak of the spirit in which you should assist this, and every other society or individual who may be engaged in the service of the Redeemer? Let the love of Christ constrain you,—act from the pure motive of love to him, and believe me, you will never regret, in time or in eternity, in the hour of death or in the day of judgment, any proof of love you may have ever exhibited to the Lord Jesus. What is done unto the least of his brethren he counts—oh! wondrous love and condescension! as if done unto himself,—*"inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me."* There is a day of light and knowledge, and glory, just coming on the earth, when God will fulfil all that he hath spoken. Hasten, O Lord, that day in thine own good and appointed time! that day which Isaiah foretold, and concerning which the Prophet Baptist took up the joyful strain, and on Jordan's bank proclaimed, "that all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." Amen, Amen.

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THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

No. LXXIX.

SATURDAY, MARCH 16TH, 1839.

PRICE 4D.

REV. JOHN LEVER.

Rev. P. POUNDEN.

FUNERAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED IN DURROW CHURCH ON THE OCCASION OF THE INTERMENT OF

THE LATE EARL OF NORBURY,

BY THE

REV. JOHN LEVER, A.M.,

&c. &c.

THE last sad rite is done—the solemn service is concluded—all is over! Yet affection and piety linger still beside those loved remains, and find it hard to part, and part for ever. But the Church is silent—she speaks no more! Like a tender mother she turns to the living—’tis the living now demand her care—and she desires that you, brethren, may derive the due improvement from this afflicting scene. Like a mother the Church watched over the cradle of his infancy, and while yet a babe, dedicated him in baptism to the service of Christ, and the worship of the Triune-Jehovah,

VOL. IV.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! As a child, she taught him the way that he should go, putting into his hand the Sacred Scriptures, “ a lantern unto his feet, and a light unto his paths” in this vale of tears, and the “ dark valley of the shadow of death :” those Scriptures which are “ able to make even a child wise unto Salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” It was the Church which blessed him in the maturer season of life, and hallowed the social tie. She visited him when sick ; comforted and supported him in weakness and sorrow ; and in the dying hour, commended his parting spirit

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into the hands of his Creator and Saviour, in devout and holy prayer. But her solicitude can reach no further—her regards are for the living. Bear with me, then, dear friends, while I endeavour, as the minister of Christ, and the officer of that church, to fulfil her intentions, and to speak to your soul's welfare, deriving lessons to the living from the dead.

But, oh! where or how shall I begin? While indignation, horror, grief, and shame press upon my heart—amidst the crowd of conflicting emotions and ideas which rush upon me—upon what topic shall I address you—or how make selection? Besides, if ever circumstances themselves might be supposed to speak—or the very sight itself dispense with the voice of a preacher, here is that sad sight. Look there! within one week—this very day week—life, health, happiness, friends, reason, affections, sympathies, passions—all awake and warm—active—in existence; now all past, “as a dream in the night”—hushed in the deep silence of the grave. Oh! if man were not the inconsiderate creature that he is—if we would but listen, what lessons might we not draw of the instability of life—the vanity of earth—the insecurity of possessions—the inadequacy of rank and wealth to confer happiness even in this world—and the necessity of living unto God—living, that we may learn to die! But, alas! man will not hear—yea, though God speak to him in his providences, when “the voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness, discovereth the forests,” and carrieth desolation along with it—nor yet when he strives in the workings of conscience, and speaks within in “the still small voice.” “Surely (says Agur) I am more brutish than any,

and I have not the understanding of a man.” Oh! that He may cause you to hear, to “hear the rod, and who hath appointed it”—to hear the voice of his messenger, speaking “peace by Jesus Christ.”

Look, again, what a monument of sin is there! Sin has drawn down this wrath upon our land, clouded our faces with sorrow, and bowed down our hearts with grief. Yes, we may talk of sin, and begin with sin, the fountain and origin of all our griefs. He was a sinner, and a son of Adam, and he died. The man, too, that wrought this bloody deed was a sinner, and inherited the guilt of Adam; and all we alike are sinners, and must die—for death is the penalty of sin. Yes, beloved, 'tis sin—sin on every side of us, around us, and within us—yours, and yours, which has brought upon us this fearful chastisement, this common calamity.

We have been a proud, ungrateful, and rebellious people—we have despised and neglected authority, which, in the great ones of the earth, is the visible image of the dominion of God—we have resisted the ordinance of God in resisting power, and reaped condemnation. A spirit of unsubmission and insubordination, a wild democracy (a mark of the latter days) has invaded us. Men now are “traitors, heady, high-minded, proud, boasters, disobedient to parents”—and from us, like undutiful children, God, in his anger, has taken away a parent and protector. Come down, then, and sit in the dust, and let us talk of sin, which desolates the earth, and turns God's countenance from us. Now, “sin is the transgression of the law”—or to expand the definition of the Apostle, it

is the creature lifting up his hand against the Creator—the subject rebelling against his liege Lord—the dependant upon his bounty for life, health, faculties, powers, existence—madly, proudly, ungratefully turning upon his benefactor, preserver, God. This is sin; and this has been our conduct, for “there is none’ righteous, and all have sinned.” Sin has cursed the earth with thorns and thistles, storm and tempest: sin has alienated the heart of man from God, planted enmity, and fixed a moral gulph, impassable, between—enslaving, ensnaring, deluding, enticing—handing us over to the great enemy of God, and our souls—leading down to the gates of death, and (unrepented of) ending in the bitter wages of death eternal. Dying sinners that we are, what shall we speak of but of sin and curse—of heaven forfeited, and hell and misery entailed upon the sons of men; “for we must needs die, and be as water spilled upon the ground.” “It is appointed unto all men, once to die.”

Is there, then, no hope? and, (to finish the quotation) does not God devise means that his banished be not expelled from him? There is, beloved brethren, there is hope; he does devise means; he has sent us ‘a Saviour and a mighty one.’ Ruined, helpless, fallen man could find no remedy; the pit was digged, and every step he took hurried him nearer to the precipice’s edge, till he tumbled in headlong, downwards, and for ever. But God—“he saw that there was no man, he wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore his own arm brought salvation.”

And now we preach unto you Jesus the Saviour of sinners. We speak no longer of sin, but of that gracious One

who “loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood,”—and this shall be our theme for eternity. “God so loved the world that he gave his Son, his well-beloved, only begotten Son—gave him out of his bosom, gave him to suffer shame and spitting—gave him to be a houseless outcast, a wanderer on the earth—gave him to agonise and bleed, and die upon the cross, to bear the curse, to carry the burden, to be “made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” Oh, flee to the Saviour, accept his gracious offer, lay hold upon his salvation, sprinkle your hearts by faith with the blood of this sacrifice, that you may stand clean, “not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish”—accepted in the Beloved—all your sins blotted out, and for ever.

Men of Durrow!—I turn to you. My happiest days were spent amongst you; I loved your parish, and my voice sounds familiar amid these old walls; for often in this house of prayer have I spoken to you the words of eternal life. But, oh! who could now desire to live amongst you?—how can I love you still? The stain of blood is upon your soil—that blood cries to God for vengeance, and the murderer still stalks abroad! no hand is lifted up against him—no finger points him out—no tongue whispers even his name!

He whom we mourn, walked forth in the evening of that fatal day, in his unsuspecting, kind, benevolence of heart; he feared no danger, was conscious of no enemy, for all had right to be his friends. He stood in the midst of his own demesne, among the trees he loved, in

the field—the field—the very scene of the primeval murder! Is it not said—“God made the country, and man made the town?” Is not country life regarded as the type of innocence? Is it not amidst the quiet solitudes of nature, that man, if he possesses but one spark even of religious instinct, lifts up his thoughts to God in gratitude and adoration for all he sees around him? There in the field, lurked the murderer!—hellish vengeance rankling in his breast—and Satan himself filling his heart, and urging him to the commission of this most foul and most unnatural murder!

Can anything be added in aggravation of his crime? *It was a holiday!*—well might God speak to you, as to his church of old, by the mouth of his prophet Isaiah—“Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when you spread forth your hands I will hide mine eyes from you, yea, when ye make many prayers I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.” *It was a holiday!*—Oh, your holidays, your holidays! It was the feast of the circumcision, when Christ, who took upon him our very nature, entered upon that course of obedience which ended in crucifixion and death—commencing the work from which he desisted not, till on the cross he exclaimed—“It is finished!”—and then sin was made an end of, and an everlasting righteousness brought in. That day week was the feast of the incarnation—another holiday!—to celebrate His

birth whose advent brought “peace on earth to men of good will.” (a) Men of good will! What ought you to do?—Your generous, liberal, bountiful benefactor and landlord is dead—slain by a ruthless hand. You should arouse yourselves from this torpor—this apathy. It is not enough that all faces gather blackness—you should be up and stirring, to testify your hot indignation against the unknown author of this fell deed. Clear yourselves, not of participation—(I do not suspect you)—not of sympathising—(I would not charge you)—clear yourselves of any coldness, or timidity, or want of zeal to hunt down the evil man; and testify, by your unanimous exertions, that you, too, abhor this deed of blood which has disgraced the land, and stained the profession of our common christianity. Merciful God! why delayest thou to strike, why is thine hand not plucked out of thy bosom, or thy “soul not avenged on such a nation as this?” Alas, alas! how much have we provoked thee, how many have been our departures and backslidings from thee! but do thou, O God, have mercy upon us, for the sake of Jesus Christ thy Son.

To you, dear friends, whose hearts are wrung with grief under this awful visitation, I would speak in words of tenderest warning, comfort, and exhortation. You weep—yes, you may well weep. You have lost a father and a friend—one whose worth, those alone who were as intimate with him as you were, can rightly appreciate. Weep on—nature must have her way, and tears must flow! Yet “sorrow not as those without hope.”

Memory fondly dwells upon the past, and cherishes his image in your hearts ; but hope—christian hope springs forward, looks beyond the grave, and anticipates the day when “those who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him” at his coming. Remember, too, how many drops of comfort were kindly mingled in this cup of bitterness—how many mercies softened this deep calamity. It was a mercy to see him again in the flesh, to have him spared to you for two days longer ; to know that his thoughts were turned to heaven ; to join with him in devout and holy prayer (I never saw more devoutness in prayer than he evinced,) and to know that his parting breath was spent, with his last strength, extending the hand of blessing upon his children and

family. Remember all this, and repine not, nor rebel against God.

I have done. Young men, “remember your Creator in the days of youth ;” for youth passes away and has no stay but God.

Old men, hurrying onwards to the grave, about to “go hence and to be no more seen,” remember,—fading, feeble age has no hope nor refuge but in Christ the Saviour.

Mortal beings passing down the stream of time into the ocean of eternity—“now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.” Oh, lay hold upon that salvation.

O God of eternity ! “so teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” Amen.

THOUGHTS

SUGGESTED BY THE DEATH OF LORD NORBURY.

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"Come down and sit in the dust, and let us talk of sin, which desolates the earth  
and hides God's countenance from us."

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Rev. John Lever's Funeral Address.
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Shut out the world with all its flitting  
mirth,  
And ev'ry ling'ring thought that clings to  
earth.  
Come down—and enter yonder sable room,  
Where all around is stilly as the tomb ;  
And in that chamber where your bier is  
spread,  
Commune a moment with the mighty dead.  
What means this stillness ! whence the thrill  
of fear  
That chills the pulse as we approach that  
bier,  
As if the spell that bound the dead had  
power  
Over the living ? Why does nature cower  
Before that shrouded corse, and shrink  
aghast  
From that marr'd form, whence life hath  
lately pass'd ?  
Oh ! 'tis no meagre grief—no common woe—  
But something more than *death* that clouds  
our brow,  
'Tis *death in fearful aspect*—robed in blood—  
Speaking of coming vengeance as a flood  
To whelm the land,—and sin hath done it all,  
Cov'ring the earth as with a funeral pall,  
Leaving it cheerless, desolate, and dead,  
Meet for the grave, with darkness over-  
spread,  
Hiding the banner, Jesus hath unfurl'd—  
Shutting out God from his created world.  
Look at its victim there ; in silence laid  
On his last couch—Oh ! doth he not upbraid  
Each looker on ? for we are mortals still,  
And man was found to do the deed of ill !  
A deed to startle heav'n, and draw a tear  
From blessed spirits in their holy sphere,  
Where all is happiness, for all is love  
Throughout the hosts that guard the throne  
above.  
Yet he was unsuspecting, gen'rous, free,  
The friend of man, and knew no enemy—  
Well may we tremble and look pale with  
fear,

Sin hath indeed achiev'd a triumph here.  
Look on the dead again :—"All flesh is  
grass,"  
And life a shadow that will quickly pass,  
And then—*our* poor remains shall testify,  
What sin hath wrought for all—that man  
must die.  
But look again : 'tis marble—nought of  
life  
Ruffles the visage, yesterday so rife  
With thought and intellect ! the soul has  
fled ;  
But oh ! it is not as the body, *dead*.  
It *lives* unharm'd, and shall again supply  
Life to that trunk, and motion to that eye,  
When He who made the body at the first,  
Shall recreate it from its scattered dust—  
And it shall live *for ever* ! thought sublime !  
To which the dull and weary round of time  
Seems but a moment ; and the earth we  
tread  
A sepulchre, meet only for the dead.  
The world is nothing—all its hopes must die,  
"The gift of God is immortality,"  
Yea more—eternal blessedness and peace,  
And joys—celestial joys, that never cease !  
Sinner, rejoice ! the plague of sin is stay'd  
And Christ himself its penalty has paid :  
Death hath been vanquish'd, Satan bound  
in chains,  
And lo ! the Conqueror of Satan reigns !  
Thou Monarch of the living and the dead,  
At whose command light was, and darkness  
fled—  
O God of mercy ! dissipate the gloom  
That, like the dreary shadows of the tomb,  
Still broods upon our hearts ; and let the  
light  
That broke on Calvary, illumine the night  
Of our affliction :—let earth's turmoil cease,  
And give to weary man thy heavenly  
peace.

R.D.

CHRISTIAN UNITY.

## A SERMON,

PREACHED IN WESTPORT CHURCH, DIOCESE OF TUAM,

ON SUNDAY, 17<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 1839,

BY THE REV. P. POUNDEN, A.M.

I CORINTHIANS, i. 13.

“Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?”

This passage stands connected with St. Paul's remonstrance touching the unseemly divisions of the church of Corinth. One year and six months had the apostle laboured amongst them—he was deputed by Christ in person to the work—and encouraged by the divine assurance that God had much people in that city. (a) The Holy Ghost had conferred upon that people the richest miraculous endowments, “so that they came behind in no gift waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor. i. 7.) But gifts are one thing, and charity another.—Gifts they might possess, yet not be personally safe. Gifts, such as of tongues, of prophecy, and of healing, were given to some for the sake of others, or for the manifestation of God's glory; but without grace, the possessors of such gifts might still be unkind or envious—proud, boastful and impatient—indecorous, selfish, and irritable—prejudiced and censorious—glorying in the failings of those whose fall might appear in anywise to contribute to their elevation.

Without charity, a character such as this, though you clothe him with the powers of an apostle, and invest him with the eloquence of angels—though his capacious intellect takes in the discoveries of science, and his extraordinary powers of faith uproot the loftiest mountain—though his outward acts of munificence are only limited by the extent of his resources, and his zeal for God leads him with cheerfulness to the martyr's stake; yet, without the homely and everyday graces of meekness and humility, propriety of conduct and disinterestedness, a genuine love of truth, and a hatred of sin, “without partiality and without hypocrisy,”—such an one is stamped by the judgment of God, as but “sounding brass,” whose emptiness is the occasion of its noise, and a “tinkling cymbal” which derives its capabilities only from the impulse of others, itself being all the while inanimate and dead. (b)

It is thus, my brethren, that St. Paul accounts for the fearful state of things in the church of Corinth. Such gifts and

(a) Acts xviii. 10.

(b) 1 Cor. xiii.

yet so little grace ! So much to amaze the world, so as to lead even Gentiles to exclaim " God is in you of a truth,"

1 Cor. xiv. 25., and yet so carnal, *(a)* and contentious, *(b)* so chargeable with doing wrong, and with defrauding, *(c)* so heterodox in doctrine, *(d)* so impenitent and proud, *(e)* so latitudinarian in practice as to scruple not participating in idol feasts, *(f)* yet so ignorant of Christian privileges, and so dead to every feeling of morality and religion, as to get drunken upon the sacramental wine, *(g)* and to feast upon the bread to such a pass as to shame the poor, and throw contempt upon the Church of God. *(h)*

The Apostle in distinguishing between gifts and grace casts no reflection upon any of the gifts of God, though he exalts the possession of grace as the more excellent way. *(i)* It was not any gift of God that produced effects such as these, it was the flesh, for they were carnal and walked as men ; *(k)* and it was Satan *(l)* who, as he once " beguiled Eve through his subtity, had now corrupted their minds from the simplicity that is in Christ."—The Apostle bids them " covet earnestly the best gifts," but he reminds them that when they all began at once a display of their gifts, when all would be apostles, *(m)* all prophets, all teachers, all workers of miracles, that the unbelieving gentile looking on " should say that they were mad," 1 Cor. xiv. he reminds them that " God is not the author of confusion but of peace as in all churches of the saints." 1 Cor. xiv. 33.

This unhappy state of things deeply

grieved the soul of the inspired ambassador of God, their Father in Christ, who had " begotten them through the Gospel." 1 Cor. iv. 15. As a Jew he knew well the history of " Israel after the flesh ;" and as an inspired apostle, he was able to teach the church the proper application of that history. He therefore, in the 10th chapter, instructs the church, that Israel was its type—in their privileges, in their temptations, and in their sins, and their punishments. Israel was privileged as a baptised people, " to eat the same spiritual meat, and to drink the same spiritual drink," and " yet with many of them God was not well pleased." When, therefore, the apostle regarded the state of the visible church at Corinth, he held up the former state of Israel as its type, and as its warning—" These things happened unto them as ensamples ; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

The condition of Corinth did not take him by surprise ; it was an enemy that, when Paul laid the foundation, built upon it wood, hay, stubble. *(n)* False apostles transforming *themselves* into Apostles of Christ, *(o)* whilst they suffered this people to sit with impunity in the idol's temple, disgraced, by schisms and separations, the temple of the Living God. Every one of them said " I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ." And to meet an evil of such magnitude ; one so dishonouring to the truth of God, so injurious to brotherly intercourse, the Apostle, perhaps with some emotions of holy indignation, so,

*(a)* 1 Cor. iii. 1.

*(e)* 2 Cor. xii. 20, 21.

*(f)* 1 Cor. xii. 31.

*(n)* 1 Cor. iii.

*(b)* 1 Cor. iii. 3.

*(f)* 1 Cor. viii.

*(k)* 1 Cor. iii.

*(o)* 2 Cor. xi. 13.

*(c)* 1 Cor. vi. 8.

*(g)* 1 Cor. xi.

*(h)* 2 Cor. xi. 3.

*(d)* 1 Cor. xv. 12.

*(h)* 1 Cor. xi. 22.

*(m)* 1 Cor. xii. 29.

lemnly exclaims "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" evidently implying that nothing would justify their saying "I am of Paul?" but Christ being divided, Paul being crucified for them, or their having been baptized in his name.

To me, Brethren, there seems to be involved in these interrogatories, principles of no ordinary magnitude—principles calculated to fix our conduct in reference to the church, on truth's unchangeable basis. Such as amid the little schemes of party, amid the narrow selfishness of dissent, amid the infatuations of pride, prejudice and presumption, will give a consciousness, that in bidding where truth dwells, where the gospel shines, where the Trinity alone is worshipped, we best consult the honor of our God, and best fall in with the mind of his inspired Apostle. We shall therefore examine the import of these questions as viewed together, and then briefly look at them one by one. God grant that we may utter nothing that is not outborne by the clearest and most undeniable evidence.

I. First then. What do we infer from the combined view of the Apostle's inquiries? He threw them together not at random, no, they sustain and give light to one another. Why, brethren, it looks as though the Apostle would infer that the church belongs to him who was crucified for it and in whose name it was baptized—that as it belongs to him, it does not belong to Paul, or to Apollos, or Cephas who also is called Peter; and therefore, that to call oneself by the name of any one but of Christ, is not only to divide Christ, but is virtually to deny

that Christ bought it by his blood, and baptized it in his own name; so that if no man has a right of property in the church, no man has a right to remodel the church, to improve upon Christ's plan, to divide member from member, or if he does, he attempts to put asunder what Christ hath joined, and to usurp an authority he does not profess.

Did Paul then act out his own principles? Did he call for, or create the smallest degree of dissent in the church of Corinth? We assert, that he did not in the smallest degree violate the principles implied in the text, and that, inconsistent in doctrine and in practice as were many of these Corinthians who were baptised in the name of Jesus, yet he neither commanded one part of the body to secede from the rest, neither did he exclude a single person *finally* from visible communion, nor any amongst them, save one, did he submit to the infliction of the extraordinary punishment of delivering over to Satan:—and even that had this merciful end in view, "for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." With this single exception, which after all, as we may see, was but a temporary suspension of privilege, and by reason of the rest conniving at his wickedness, taking his part, giving him countenance, making him a favourite, and even glorying in his shame, was called for as an example, and that for *their* sakes, as well as his. With this exception—which is the strongest proof of the general rule—the apostle in no wise *contracts* the church, but *pleads* for its *enlargement*.

This servant of Christ had cause enough in Corinth, if he were so minded



to contract the church ; for there, some went so far as to deny the resurrection of the dead : and without going further into details of delinquency, which had been quite sufficient, one would think, to make him break up the system, and amend it, hear his own sorrowful statement, in 2 Cor. xii. 20, 21. " I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you, such as ye would not ; lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, back-bitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults ; and lest when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bemoan many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed." As in the 11th chapter, which treats on the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, we see that the apostle objects not to the persons taking it, but to the matter used, and the manner of doing it ; for here we see he excludes not the *persons* but corrects their *practises*, when they violated the law of God, and disgraced the profession of that holy name in which themselves had been baptised.

How then did St. Paul regard the classification of the baptised into sects and parties ? He regarded it as a dividing of Christ. Hence the inquiry of my text. And what is it to divide Christ, but to rend him, as it were, limb by limb ; to distort and derange the order of his church ; to dislocate his members ; to amputate instead of healing ; to lacerate instead of binding up ? Speaking in the 12th chapter, he says, " the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee ;

nor again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you : nay, much more, those members of the body which *seem* to be more feeble are necessary, and those members of the body which *we think* to be less honourable, upon them we bestow more abundant honor, and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness." Again, " are all apostles ? Are all prophets ? Are all teachers ?" No : the baptized are brought for instruction into Christ's church, and the members who are learners in it are forbidden to rise up in judgment upon each other. Their bond of union is the confession that Jesus is the Christ. (a) Of teachers they are to judge, but of each other not. They must see that the " spirits are of God," (1 John iv. 1.) ; must " beware of false prophets," (Matt. vii. 15.) ; must " prove all things, and hold fast that which is good," (1 Thess. v. 21.) ; but it is forbidden to judge another man's servant, (b) to set at nought a brother, (c) to ask to pull out a mote in a brother's eye, when a beam is in one's own, (d)—to act otherwise, is to mar God's plan—to separate the contents of the net before the time, (e)—to be wiser than the Lord of the harvest, who says, " let both grow together until the harvest." Matt. xiii. 30.

But it may be replied, is there no point where the apostle would restrain religious intercourse ? Yes ; where idolatry is ; where Belial is ; where the unclean sacrifice is. (f) He would not suffer the baptized to enter the idol's temple, as the 8th chapter of this epistle proves. He would not allow them to taste their sacrifices, as the 10th chapter of this epistle proves ; and therefore,

(a) 1 Cor. xii. 3, Matt. xvi. 18, 1 John iv. 2.

(d) Matt. vii. 3.

(e) Matt. xiii. 47.

(b) Rom. xiv. 4.

(f) 2 Cor. vi.

(c) Rom. xiv. 10.

where again in 2nd epistle he addresses them, he applies to the church, the Prophet Isaiah's command to Israel while in Babylon, Isaiah lii. 11. "to come out and be separate," not from any other Israelite or any member of the Church; but to come out of the idol's temple—to have no fellowship with Belial, and to touch not the unclean thing.

The apostle every where makes a very nice distinction between a Christian's *private* and *public* intercourse. The former is in his own power, the latter not. He is responsible as to his *own* house, his *own* table, his *own* company; but not for God's house, or God's table, or God's church. Hence in the 5th and 10th chapters, he tells the brethren that they might keep company with ungodly persons of this world, but that with ungodly brethren, such as fornicators, covetous, idolators or railers, or drunkards, or extortioners, they were not to keep company, no not to eat. They might eat with a heathen, as appears from chap. x. ver. 27; when he says, "if any of them that believe not, bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go, whatsoever is set before you, *eat*, asking no questions for conscience sake." But so to eat with believer or unbeliever, as to give colour and countenance to his crime, is to abuse liberty, and to volunteer a partnership in it, when it lay in our own power to go to him, or admit him to us; and accordingly with that nice discernment which the Spirit of truth invariably observes, the apostle defines the motives and the principles, on which social intercourse is to be carried on.

Further, when in chapter v. he calls upon the church "to purge out the old leaven" he tells them in the next verse, that he means "the leaven of malice and

wickedness," which they were to purge from their own hearts, as well as from their private intercourse with others; and if he blames them for going to law before the unjust, and for not appointing judges amongst themselves, this judging he defines in the sixth chapter 3d and 4th verses, as of things pertaining to this life; so that a candid examination of the epistle proves that there is no exception, as to Paul's desire to keep together the members of the visible church, and to prevent the dividing of the body of Christ. The only person whom he excludes, as well for *their* improper glorying, as for the man's own sake, is thus reinstated in their favour in the second chapter of the second epistle: "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many, so that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him and comfort him, lest perhaps such an one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore, I beseech you that you would confirm your love towards him."

Thus then, St. Paul, while he would keep the line of demarcation between Christian and Gentile—between God's temple and idols—between the table of the Lord and the table of devils—as accurately defined as possible—has left the membership of the church unbroken and undiminished—rebukes sharply the attempts to interrupt its unity, and charges those who do so by his solemn interrogatory—"Is Christ divided?" with mutilating Christ's body and rending him limb by limb.

Again, when the Apostle coupled with this, asks "was Paul crucified for you?" he touches a cord to which every Christian heart must vibrate. Combining as he does their sectarianism with this inquiry, he seems to infer that as none

has a right over the church, but he who was crucified for it, and thereby bought it with his blood, so for one to say, "I am of Paul, and another I am of Apollos," is to attribute an ownership to one or other, and thus virtually to deny the ownership of Christ. What an awful point of view does this position place a dividing spirit in? Ah! was it for this that Jesus bled and died, when he was yielding up the ghost upon the cross? were *his* sympathies so narrow as to withhold a prayer for his very enemies?—"Father forgive them for they know not what they do" was his benevolent supplication. If then Paul was not crucified for you, why should any of you say, "I am of Paul?" Paul himself disclaims such usurpation—the church—the vineyard is not Paul's—it is God that giveth the increase. You, as though he would say, are those for whom Christ died, for whom Christ was crucified—and will Christ, think you, commend that sort of loyalty which in words confesses him, but in works denies him? Will Christ approve the salutation that while it kisses, betrays, and while it professes zeal for *his* honor, transfers its own allegiance to another, and denominates itself by another's name? A dying Saviour mourns such infatuation; a living Saviour will rebuke it. The very garment of Christ was spurned by the unfeeling soldiers at the cross; but, his mystical body is unwarrantably divided by the ungarded zeal of his professed disciples. If then the church is Christ's let its members flee false *teachers*, bring their doctrines to the test of the bible; but while you sit as *learners*, occupy the

lowest room. "Let a man examine *himself*;" (a) let us judge ourselves, (b) let the strictest scrutiny be into our own consciences, let us ask God "to search us and to try the ground of our hearts; but let not member rise against member, let the strong bear the infirmities of the weak," (c) "let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not, and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth." (Rom. xiv. 3.) "Why dost thou judge thy brother, or why dost thou set at nought thy brother, for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ,"—(Rom. xiv. 10.) "Let us not therefore judge one another any more, but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way." (Rom. xiv. 13.) Let then, those who enjoy the comfort to know, that Christ was crucified *for them*; determine not to know anything else among the brethren, (d) and avoid the schism that would amount to a practical denial of that truth, and a flagrant and wilful violation of the apostolic command.

The question—"Was Paul crucified for you?" at once puts our suffrage to the test. Shall we, by *not dividing*, virtually avow that it was not Paul but Christ; or shall we, by our divisions, allow it to be inferred it was not Christ but Paul? Shall we give our suffrage to man or God? to the flesh or to the spirit? or rather, by abiding with the truth, let who will dishonour it, evidence that ours is a respect to principles, not a respect to persons—that though every man be a liar yet God is true—and that, faithful amid the faithless, we love our church in her doctrines, even when, like Corinth of old,

(a) 1 Cor. xi. 28.

(b) 1 Cor. xii. 31.

(c) Rom. xv. 1.

(d) 1 Cor. ii. 2.

we discern inconsistency in many of the members thereof.

When Paul rebukes the divisions with this strange and strong inquiry, "Was Paul crucified for you?" he intimates that these framers of sects had come down from their respect to God, and put man virtually in his place—that they descended from the lofty elevation of the platform, and the place that was settled by Christ for the standing of his church, and that, devising what expediency suggested as an improvement, they carved and hammered and fitted the invention of their own with planes and nails and compass and line—and then setting it in its place, called their ingenious theory a model of the Church of God.

The Romanist says, "I am of Peter;" he lifts his church above the Bible, and makes the commanding power of God of none effect by his tradition—he is severed from us by his admission of an idol into the temple of God—by "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men;" and we but obey the word when we beware of false prophets—when we try the spirits—and "cease to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the ways of knowledge." The dissenter who denies not our principles, but dislikes our persons, is not so much a dissenter from ourselves as from the whole spirit of the Bible on the subject of the church—from the practice of the Apostles, as well as from the principles on which the unity of the visible church is fixed by its founder and its head. If, then, we thoroughly maintain that it was not man but God—not Paul but Christ, that bought the Church of God with his own blood—let us carry out the truth into all its branching details, and never lie subject to that spiritual

thunderbolt contained in the Apostle's interrogations, "*Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you?*"

But St. Paul follows up his questions—he further demands, "Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" This came more within the reach and power of an innovation than either the dividing of Christ or the suffering of crucifixion. The baptizing in another name was literally possible, and therefore Paul labours to disabuse their minds of such a supposition—he avers it as a reason of his baptizing so few, lest persons should give out that he baptized in his own name; and he employs the comparative negative so often used in Scripture—"Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the Gospel"—*i. e.* sent me rather to preach than to baptize.

The question of the Apostle, "Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" implies that whoever baptized them, they were, every one of them, baptized; that being baptized in the name of Christ, they were not their own, not Paul's, not man's, but avouched as the servants of Jesus, and his only. We cannot enough feel desirous to adopt correct opinions on the much canvassed and much misunderstood subject of baptism.

If I read aright the Saviour's words of institution, they are as follow. They are these—"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth—go ye, therefore, and make disciples, (as all Bibles with marginal readings have it,) make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matt xxviii. 19, 20.



Such is the commission—cramped and curtailed neither as to time or place or person. The Saviour claims all power; and in order to reassume his dominion over earth, as he ever enjoyed it in heaven, he commands that by baptizing in his name all nations should be discipled—and being discipled, should he fully taught his word—and being fully taught his word, his presence is promised to the teaching to the end of time. To attach oneself to a party, to assume another's name, even though it be of Paul or Cephas, is to limit Christ's claims over the nations of the earth, and to narrow the bounds of his jurisdiction—it is to contract when he expands, and to circumscribe the limits of his authority and power. The whole church is baptized, and baptism is analogous to Jewish circumcision. In one place it is called the circumcision of Christ, or Christian circumcision. The Church of Corinth was also baptized, and so every church of which mention is made in the New Testament; and when we reconsider the sad declension, irregularity, and inconsistency of many of the members in Corinth, may we not inquire—What advantage, then, had such a Christian, and what profit was there in baptism? We reply, “much every way—chiefly that unto them are committed the oracles of God; for what if some do not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God of none effect?” The soldier who is unfaithful, the servant who hides his talent, the subject who is disaffected—are all left without excuse, simply because the claim and rightful authority of commander, master, and monarch remains the same. The responsibility of the one, and the authority of the other, are undiminished by

such delinquency. The attempt, therefore, to disunite the enlisted soldiers of an army, is an act of revolt against their general. To divide the subjects of an empire is treason against a king. “Each to his own master stands or falls.” When Paul asks the dividers at Corinth “were they baptized in the name of Paul,” he remembers that the baptized belong confessedly to another Master—another Sovereign—and that casting division and disunion among their ranks, is but helping the cause of rebellion, and impairing the extension of Christ's supremacy throughout the world.

To me, brethren, and I well know, to you it is a far more welcome and gratifying task, instead of protecting the outworks of our Zion from external invasion or domestic strife, to abide within her sanctuary, and dwell upon the wonders of redeeming love. The text, too, sweetly suggests that not only Christ was crucified, but that he was crucified *for* us. That his atonement was a work undertaken in our behalf, and that it stands forth the one, sole, effectual, unchangeable satisfaction for our sins: and yet you see the apostle so brings that sacrifice into contrast with our divisions, that he charges upon a dividing spirit, the fatal offence of a practical denial of it. Is then a dividing spirit the spirit of Christ and of his apostles? Is there a passage from first to last in the whole Bible, that being fairly and faithfully interpreted, infers it? Does the Lord suffer the servant to gather up the tares? Does the apostle suffer the Corinthians to say, “I am of Paul, and I of Apollos?” Is there an instance of his remedying the errors or offences of a people by calling them to quit a church where the gospel is preached and the

sacraments duly administered? Is there on record an instance of even one being finally excluded from visible communion, or a case of separation enjoined except from Baal, his temple, his unclean sacrifice, and his idolatrous worshippers? The causes of division contrary to sound doctrine is to be avoided, (*a*) the false prophet is to be shunned; but a people baptized in the name of the blessed Trinity, under a true ministry, teaching the truth, are inexcusable in their divisions; and if the truth be told, as St. Paul has told us before, are following the *flesh* under the delusion of the great tempter of mankind.

Let me then, beloved brethren, call on you to prize the truth that is amongst us, and to make the acknowledgment of that truth the bond of our union, and to act up to our privileges. I would caution you against the crude and partial statements that by means of tracts and pamphlets are attempted to be diffused amongst us. Garbled texts torn from their connexion, and placed in juxta position with other texts similarly treated, give a show of Scripture as a warrant for the sentiments of the writer. That person must be little aware of the sensitive and susceptible character of the human mind, that so far trifles with it, as to subject it either to the sophistries of infidel publications, or the plausibilities of those that are super-scriptural. Thank God we

have our Bibles and can read them as well as they. We dare not virtually mutilate them by stating that the Acts, Epistles, and Revelations are the directory of the present dispensation to the exclusion of the Gospels and the Old Testament; or that the Spirit of the Lord so abides in the church as to furnish additional revelations as supplemental to the written word. Now we can freely expatiate through a whole and a sufficient Bible, and while we deny the need of adding, or the right to detract from it, we supplicate the Holy Ghost to enlighten us upon all its contents—and blessed be our God, we experience his grace and illumination to the full extent that we are warranted to expect. Believe me then, brethren, that they best in this respect, follow the mind of the Spirit, who abide in the counsel of Paul, and let all them who differ from it try to answer his solemn interrogations—“Is Christ divided? is Paul crucified for you? or were you baptized in the name of Paul?”

May the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Amen.

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(*a*) Rom. xvi. 17.

## HUMILITY.

THE ancient philosophers, amidst all their panegyrics upon virtue, and inquiries into the elements of moral excellence, not only valued the grace of humility at an exceedingly low estimate, but reckoned it a quality so contemptible as to neutralize the other properties, which went, in their estimation, to the composition of a truly noble and exalted character. These sentiments have been adopted in modern times by the great majority both of the vulgar and of the philosophers, differing from their predecessors chiefly in this circumstance,—the more complete absence of that humility and modesty which would have adorned them, and in their determined and obstinate rejection of that true standard of character, after which the ancients so eagerly sought. By the touchstone which Christianity applies to the human character, it is found that pride and independence, which the world falsely dignifies with the epithet honourable, are really base alloy; and that of every character formed upon proper principles, and possessed of genuine worth, humility is at once a distinguishing feature, and the richest ornament. And on this subject, as well as on all others, Christianity accords with the sentiments of right reason,—that it is unquestionably the duty of every intelligent creature to be humble; for “they have nothing that they have not received,” and are indebted in every movement they make to an agency infinitely superior to their own.

It has been generally and justly supposed that pride impelled Satan and his confederates to a mad “defiance of the Omnipotent to arms,” for which they were expelled from heaven, and taught,

in their bitter experience, that “God resisteth the proud.” And what is it that prompts those high Intelligences who surround the throne of the Almighty, in the full effulgence of celestial glory, to cast their crowns at his feet, crying, that he “alone is worthy,” but humility—a feeling of their unworthiness to appear in the presence of uncreated excellence! But if humility enter so largely into angelic worth, what might be expected to be the character of man? Created originally lower than the angels, is it unworthiness of his character and dignity to be humble! Fallen from his innocence—become a sinner, a rebel, a child of wrath, an heir of hell—is it a disgrace to be humble? Preserved from utter destruction only by the long suffering and rich mercy of Jehovah; redeemed by the precious blood of the eternal Son of God; indebted to Him for his present comforts, and his hopes of future enjoyment,—does it detract from man to be humble? Or rather, where can an object be found more fitted to move pity, and make an angel weep, than a proud man! A man may be proud, however inconsistently with his real condition; but a proud Christian is a paradox. A Christian, in proportion as he is proud, is ignorant of his own character, and deficient in his resemblance to Him, who, combining in himself every thing great, and good, and lovely, “was meek and lowly in heart.” The more humble a Christian is, he is the more exalted and worthy; and it will be found for ever a truth, that lowliness of heart is real dignity, and that humility is the brightest jewel in the Christian crown.

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# THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

## GOSPEL PREACHER.

“We preach Christ crucified—

“Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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REV. R. S. BROOKE.

REV. G. S. SMITH.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

### A SERMON

PREACHED IN THE MARINER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, KINGSTOWN,

BY THE REV. RICHARD S. BROOKE, A.M.

Chaplain.

Luke xxii. part of 19th v.

“This do in remembrance of me.”

I HAVE chosen this text, which refers to our Lord's last supper with his twelve Apostles, as a fit subject for this peculiar season. I am aware that many of the youthful members of my congregation are coming forward to the Lord's table for the first time at the ensuing festival; and as I trust I shall see all those among you who are of God's dear family flocking up to that happy ordinance at the same time, I am anxious to set before you, as far as I am able, the nature, obligations, warnings, and consolations, which this sacrament of the Lord's Supper holds out to every mixed congregation.

In considering the text, we find it involves two things for examination—

First—*A Direction from Christ*—“Do this.”

Secondly—*An explanatory motive*—“In remembrance of me.”

I. A DIRECTION FROM CHRIST.—Now to whom was this direction addressed?

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manifestly to his twelve Apostles. I will not now go into the mystery of Judas, the apostate and traitor, the liar and hypocrite, devil and murderer, being received as a participator of that feast—which thing is manifest from this very chapter—his coming to the supper being declared in the 14th verse—and his remaining till after the cup had been given, appearing from the 20th and 21st verses. This is a great mystery to the people of God; but by and by, when “we shall know as we are known,” God's wisdom in this and every other difficulty will be justified. In the mean time let us draw a lesson from this occurrence, which our church would inculcate in her admirable service. If there be a Judas among you—a hypocrite—a traitor to God—an evil worker, or one living in any grievous sin, “come not to that Holy table lest after the taking of that Holy sacrament the Devil enter into you, as he entered into Judas,

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and fill you full of all iniquities, and bring you to destruction both of body and soul." (See exhortation in Communion Service.) Oh let such not come forward lest they eat and drink their own damnation, and kindle God's holy indignation and righteous wrath against you.

"This do in remembrance of me." As this was directed to the Apostles *then*, so it is addressed *now* to the Church of Christ. But who are the Church of Christ? If we ask the question from man, each christian and unchristian corporation of worshippers will bring forward their peculiar claim. "We are the true church," says the false and idolatrous harlot of Rome; "no," say the Plymouth Schismatics, "we are the only perfect church;" "no," say the Irvingites, "you have not the gifts among you, we are the Body of Christ;" while other bodies advance their claims more moderately, but as decisively. Let us cease from outward churches, and to seek a solution from man, and inquire at God's oracles and testimony. We shall find the believing Catholic Church of Christ defined in two Scriptures. First, in Philippians iii. 3, "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Secondly in Rom. viii. 1, "There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit."

To such is the exhortation addressed—"This do in remembrance of me."

But let us not be over exclusive as to who are the fit recipients of these holy mysteries—let us not discourage the feeble and too sensitive Christian, while we seek to deter the rash, the ignorant, the careless, and the cold. As Christ never yet put back a broken-hearted sinner from coming to him, neither should we repel one bruised reed from his table. Let this be our test—a *godly grief for sin, and a sincere solicitude for salvation, based on an intelligent conception of the word and work of Jesus*. This is absolutely necessary, for zeal without knowledge is not grace, as knowledge without zeal is not grace either; they must be combined. If our understanding, then, has received the doctrines of the Gospel, and approved of them, and our heart, however misdoubting itself and clouded by its own fears, would cordially desire to unite itself to its Christ—why, then, come,

to you is the word sent—Jesus would have you, and such as you, at his table, to strengthen and refresh you.

"*This do.*" Now, these words are spoken emphatically as a *friend* to his friends; as if he had said, "*at least do this.*" Here is no hard service, to eat my body and to drink my blood—"behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open unto me, I will come in unto him and sup with him, and he with me." "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey; I have drank my wine with my milk; eat, oh friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, oh beloved."

And these words, "This do," are likewise spoken *instructively*. As our *Prophet*, he would teach his people by this sacrament; and as his preached Gospel is addressed to the outward ear, so the Lord's Supper is addressed to the outward eye. Let us see what is to be learned from this outward sight.

*Three things* especially the Lord would teach you in this ordinance.

*First*—That Christ is the bread of your soul, and wine of your soul, approached unto, received, and fed upon in this ordinance; that as you feed on the outward sign of creature elements sensibly and corporeally, so you feed on the inward grace or thing signified faithfully and spiritually to the strengthening and refreshing of your souls, as your bodies are refreshed and strengthened by the bread and wine.

*Secondly*—Christ, as your *Prophet*, would teach you how in this ordinance your union to him as your glorious living head is not merely outwardly typified by the sensible reception of the elements, but actually and inwardly increased and strengthened; for as you eat, drink, and incorporate the elements, they passing into and blending with your physical being, so in like manner your spiritual man takes in, and as it were incorporates the body and blood of Jesus, thereby becoming more deeply bound up in his life, and identified with him more intimately as "bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh," and members of his mystical body.

*And Thirdly*—Christ, as your *Prophet*, would teach you by this ordinance that his New Testament was now in full force; for, dear friends, these symbols are not

the symbols of a *living* but a *dead* Jesus—his body wounded to death for our transgressions, and his last life-drop poured in blood from his heart to purge our sins away. Now, this his Testament had been of no force had he never died. But he *has* died—here are the broken and bleeding records of his death; survey them by faith as setting forth his death until his coming; therefore is his Testament—the testator having died, see Heb. ix. 16, 17, 18—in full force; and in that Testament remember his people have the “promise of eternal inheritance.” Heb. ix. 16, 17, 18.

And these words, “This do,” are likewise spoken by Christ as our *King* authoritatively.

“If I be a father,” says the Lord, “where is my honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear?” Your great Captain expects you to keep this your military oath with him; and if an earthly commander had but to say to his servant, “go,” and he went, and “come,” and he came, how much more “ought we to be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live.” “See then, oh believer, that ye refuse not him who speaketh.” If ye love him ye will keep his commandments,” and *this* is his commandment to you to-day—“This do in remembrance of me.”

Do it then, dear Christian friends, as unto the Lord and in his Spirit; and oh, ye who are coming forward this day, take heed to yourselves with what mind ye approach these sacred mysteries. *Do not come to this table formally*—for mere form—to fulfil an outward ceremony. Oh, it is too awful. Would you offer the shell of your heart to God, and deny him the substance? Remember when you come formally you come as hypocrites; for what is formality but unintentional hypocrisy. Oh, do not wear a mask at the table of your God—do not come with a lie in your right hand to him, and another in your left hand to your neighbour.

*Do not come “grudgingly or of necessity”*—many do so, and need I say that such are unworthy recipients; many say, “I want to get home to open my letters, to read my papers—the service is so long—but my family and my neighbours are remaining, and so I *must* stay also.” Oh, with such a mind it were better for you to go home, not to break the Sabbath, but to read your Bible and seek your God.

*Do not come Popishly.* Dear friends,

when I designate the members of the Church of Rome as Popish, I do it, God knoweth, from no political bias or bitterness, for such I most unfeignedly disclaim, but simply from the idea that it best expresses what they are. What else can we call them? If we term them *Catholics*, which is their present *fashionable* name, I admit that I and my church, the true Catholic Church, who are pledged before God to protest against *Popish* abominations, are Schismatics, which would be a lie in God’s house. If I call them *Romanists*, I express nothing; if I term them *Roman Catholics*, I use what appears to me a contradiction in terms, for I blend together to express the one thing a particular and universal term; I Catholicize particularity—I individualize universality; I generalize a mere locality—a speck on the great features of Catholic geography.

Dear friends, do not make this blessed sacrament a Popish mass; do not make it your Christ, as many do, not merely for sins past but for sins to come. Is not this the case?

Come forward *humbly*, with a deep sense of your own unworthiness, and a heart crushed beneath the twofold weight of your God’s love and your own sin. How beautifully is the spouse represented at supper in Cants. i. 12, “While the King sitteth at his table my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.” Now, the spikenard is a very small plant, with slender stem and slender roots, and very humble and lowly in appearance. Come then to the Lord’s feast with the spikenard of true humility; wear it in your heart—the broken heart which Jesus loves, and in which he will dwell. This grace will be sweet to your God and your King as he sits at his table to meet his guests.

Come *reverently* to this ordinance. Some excellent Christians object to the posture we churchmen use at the Lord’s table—they find fault with our kneeling; but we do not kneel to the elements but unto Christ. Surely, if our Lord made the people *sit down* when he was feeding their bodies, how much more should we *kneel down* when he is feeding our souls. And if he himself knelt when receiving the *cup of wrath*, oh should not we much more when taking the *cup of blessing*, which is the seal of our salvation.

Again, come *Faithfully*. Eating, drinking, praying, receiving, enjoying, and being refreshed in faith through the

Holy Ghost. Approach this table looking unto Jesus; shut your eyes upon the outward world; open your eyes upon the inward world of your heart—the upward world of your hope; do not be looking at your neighbours, or forming judgments in your own mind, as certain Schismatics do, as to their fitness to partake. “What is that to thee, follow thou me,” says Christ. It is not thou who art to decide in such a matter, “Who made thee a judge?” When the “King comes in to see the guests,” *He*, not thou, will see who has or has not the wedding garment on; “therefore judge nothing before the day of the Lord come,” “when the day will declare every man’s work, for then shall every man’s work be made manifest.”

II. We will secondly consider the EXPLANATORY MOTIVE contained in the words of the text—“*In remembrance of me.*” The Lord’s Supper is an act of remembrance; for as often as the faithful eat and drink thereat, they “do show forth the Lord’s death till he come.” We must not exalt unduly this holy sacrament, nor ought we to depress it unduly. There is no Transubstantiation or change of the substance of the elements in this sacrament, as the Popish Church rashly sets forth; there is no real presence, though the Lord is *spiritually* present; nor does our pure Reformed Church hold the monstrous blasphemy that the Great God, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, is circumscribed and bound up in a wafer of paste at the bidding of an idolatrous priest.

Nor is there Consubstantiation in this sacred rite, as the Greek Church fondly imagines—asserting that Christ is actually, though invisibly, incorporated with the creature elements, and his human nature and divinity blended up and concealed under the bread and wine.

No; the bread and wine are as they appear—bread and wine, consecrated to be sure in this ordinance for God’s service, but mere creatures before that consecration as after, and receiving no intrinsic or essential holiness in that consecration; which is to be understood as a setting apart, as the vessels of the temple in days of old were set apart, which were holy unto the Lord by an outward consecration for God’s service.

“*In remembrance of me.*” Yes, in remembrance of his broken body—symbolized by the broken bread. Let us

pause to consider that body. We are told it was prepared of God, Heb. x. 5; and though to outward eye it had no form or comeliness, yet it must have been exquisitely strung, like a fine instrument—no sin to blunt its sensitiveness—no sensuality to deaden the refinements and harmonies of its construction. And was *this* a body to be marred and broken more than any man’s? Yes, surely thy people will remember thee!

We can gather, too, that his was a delicate and feeble body. The Prophet saw him as a “dry root out of a barren ground,” in his human feebleness—in no other way could he have been a dry root. We read of him “asleep on a pillow”—we read of him “being weary”—the zeal of God’s house so consumed him that premature age settled on his brow, John viii. 57—he fainted under his agony—he fainted under his cross. Was this a body to endure the shameful and bloody process of the stripes and the smittings—the nails and the thorns—the vinegar and the gall, and the spear? Yes, surely we will not forget—we will remember thee!

“*In remembrance of me.*” Yes, in remembrance of his poured out blood—symbolized by the wine poured into the cup. Let us pause to consider that blood:—how universally it was shed from every part of his sacred body—from his august temples, where he wore the thorns of mockery, that he might pluck the thorns of sin and sorrow from his people’s hearts—from his sacred hands, with which he had blessed little children, the blood fell, that he might cleanse and bless the whole family of God—from his divine face the blood followed the savage blows inflicted by the armed hands of the soldiery—that “face was marred” and swollen that we “might lift up our faces without spot unto God;” his back was torn by the scourge, his shoulders galled by the cross, and his feet, which had borne their blessed burthen as he went about doing good, were lacerated and transfixed with the iron nails. The iron entered into his side, that it might not enter into our soul; then his blood was poured forth on the earth—the blood of a brother—an eldest brother—not that, like Abel’s, it might cry unto God for vengeance, but for pardon and pity; it is “the blood of the covenant, and speaketh better things than that of Abel.” His blood was his life, and the last words of his life were

words of blessedness and love, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do."

*"This do in remembrance of me."*

Come ye who love the Lord Jesus Christ, come forward and partake; behold with your natural eye these sacred symbols—behold with your spiritual eye the things signified. "Oh, may the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving. Oh! may the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life; drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for thee, and be thankful!"

In summing up the subject, we would do well to consider two or three matters in reference to this sacrament.

*First*—The characteristic of those to whom the message in my text is sent, is, *that they remembered Jesus*. Now, in order to remember a person, we must *know* him first. "Then they know him, and are known of him"—"they know him whom to know is life eternal," and by that knowledge they are justified: they know him by the hearing of the ear, for faith cometh by hearing; they know him by the seeing of the eye, for "they look unto him and are saved." And these outward symbols are incentives to awaken their memory as they drink, and say with the spouse in the Canticles, "we will remember thy love more than wine."

And again, there is a practical usefulness bearing upon our life and conversation, in beholding these symbolic evidences of a dying Saviour. Here Jesus Christ is manifestly set forth crucified among us. Oh! let us not crucify him afresh, but say whenever we partake, in the spirit and language of David, "I have set the Lord always before me, therefore shall I not be moved."

And again, we should consider a further motive involved in these words, "In remembrance of me." Oh, believer, you should remember him, because he remembered and remembers you. He remembered you in your low estate, for his mercy endureth for ever; he remembered you when you were a bondsman in Egypt—your "hands were delivered

from making the pots," and mark what glory he heaped upon you. Go back in thought along the whole shining line of your redemption, and see how on every link and articulation of that long chain, God's remembrance of you—the poor, unworthy sinner, is legibly stamped. Go back to his counsels of old, and see him mindful of you in the matter of *election*; you were then present to his mind; he wrote you upon his book, and predestinated you to eternal life. Go back to the day in which you were first "made willing," when the Lord gave you the call, and taught you the answer: he *remembered* you in the matter of *vocation*. Go back to the time when, as a sinner and a cast away, you lay unwashed in your blood before your God; he *remembered* you in the matter of *justification*; he washed you in his own blood; he spread the robes of his righteousness upon you, that he might present you faultless in himself before his Father, a justified sinner, with exceeding great joy. Go back to the sweet hours of your union and communion with your God, when you stood in spirit on the mount with Christ, and said, "It is good to be here;" when you heard the gracious whisper in your heart, and felt the peace that passeth all understanding, and tasted the deep repose of that happy joy which the world can neither give, or touch, or take. Oh! to whom are ye indebted for these hours of blessedness? even to Him who *remembered* you in the matter of *sanctification*. Go forward to the time when your body shall return to the dust, and the spirit unto God who gave it; he will not forget you then—he will remember you in the matter of *glorification*; and you will find that though "to live" here in faith was "Christ," yet "to die was gain." Ah! but you say, I feel I am dying—I am wearing away—I shall shortly go down to the dust—"there is no remembrance in the grave." Who shall give him thanks there? when earth is mingled with earth, ashes with ashes, and dust with dust. Oh! doubt him not; he will still *remember* thee, and not a hair of your head shall perish; for this poor body of yours, "sown in corruption, shall be raised in incorruption;" yea, what was "sown in dishonour shall be raised in glory;" yea, "what was sown in weakness shall be raised in power;" yea, "what was sown a natural body shall be raised a spiritual



body;" when death shall become life, and mortality shall be clothed with immortality, and the bondage of the tomb shall be no more, and the darkness of the grave shall dissipate before the light of heaven at the coming of the Lord Christ. Oh! then how we shall *remember* him in all his wondrous acts towards us, from first to last; when we shall cry and sing, "Oh! death where is thy sadness and thy sting—oh! grave where is thy gloom and thy victory?" "Thanks be unto God who hath *given us* the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord;" and glory and power, and honour and might, and riches and blessing be unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

Dear friends, bear with me a short time longer, whilst I address you practically on this matter. If there be a disobedient, rebellious, and avowedly wicked person in this church—if there be one living to the world, or living for sense or self—I beseech of such not to imagine for a moment that the words of the text are addressed to him; God does not, and man ought not, to invite you to this ordinance. Christ wants you not here; but God, and men—God and God's minister do invite you cordially and fervently to come to the Gospel feast, to the Cross—to come to the fountain; and then, when all your sins are purged away in a Saviour's precious, holy blood—*then*, and not before, come to the feast, and sit down with Christ and his Disciples, a welcome and wished for guest.

And you, oh ye carelless professors, come not to his feast, but take a lesson to your general profit from these words—"In *remembrance* of him." Remember me, says Jesus—a necessary caution to you—alas, to us all; for how soon—how oft do we forget him. Oh, what a picture of the church's weakness, and wandering, and oblivion, and neglect is set forth in the necessity which produced this cautionary precept—"This do in remembrance of me!"

Is there a self-accusing Christian here, who though the writing of ordinances which was contrary to him is taken away, will still persist in writing bitter things against himself, and in bringing forward causes and reasons more appertaining to a legal than a Gospel dispensation, why he should not come forward and partake? Suffer me to address you, dear friend—in one word, what is your objection? I

anticipate your answer will be, *my own unworthiness*. Alas, if *that* were to sway and actuate all Christians, not one in this congregation would come forward. Yes, you are indeed unworthy, but Christ is worthy. For the sake of that dear elder brother, in whom you trust, your God will receive you; and the darkness of your short comings will be swallowed up in the light and the lustre of him who sits at meat with you.

Oh, but, you say, I am so *ignorant*! Yes, indeed, you are ignorant; but this must not keep you back. The Holy Ghost is he who alone can "teach you all things," and "guide you into all truth." Come *here*, then, and meet him—he is here to day in this ordinance. Come here and renew your vows to him, and sit at his feet, and knit your soul more to him, and know him better, and learn of him more of his life, and light and heavenly love. Oh, do not stay away because conscience makes you cry, "I am ignorant."

Ah, but you say, "I am so *ungrateful* to my good God and loving Lord—so thankless a wretch, that I fear to tread the courts of this holy ordinance, or look my benefactor face to face in the breaking of bread and pouring of wine." Oh, say not so, however true and just the charge. Suffer it not to keep you this day from supping with your Lord. Remember he is a God of *grace*—"your goodness extendeth not to him." God requires no *suitable* return from his children—they are *his* pensioners—paupers depending on *his* grace—looking upward to be fed by his hand. But God *does* require a *bounden service* and duty, and here it is—come eat, drink, "*this* do in remembrance of me." And if you still cry out with the Psalmist, "What reward shall I give unto the Lord for all his goodness to me?" say with the Psalmist too, "I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord, and I will pay my vows in the presence of all his saints."

Ah, but you say, "I am *sore tempted* and *tossed*—corruption after corruption rises like a giant refreshed by wine, and tries to dim my faith, marring my peace, and clouding my communion with God." Well, then, you have the greater need to be refreshed and renewed in this ordinance. Are there clouds—is there darkness round your soul? Come forward

here, and in the night of your mental misery and disquietude, lay hold of your God with the hand of faith, and say to him—"Bless me—even me also, O my father,"—bless me, O my Saviour—"I will not let thee go unless thou bless me."

Ah, but you say, "My enemy is strong and subtle, and may prevail." Fear not, neither be afraid, oh dull of heart, and dead of feeling! They who are with you are more than they who are against you. Ah, but your unbelieving heart may cry, "I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul;" but your glorious God answers, "you shall never perish, neither shall any one pluck you out of my hand." Ah, but say you, "My foes are so numerous, their name is legion;" "yes," answers your long-suffering God, "but my name is Adonai, that is pillar." Ah, but say you, "My temptations come with me to church, and throng round me at the Lord's table;" yet your victorious

Lord answers, "though the Philistines be upon you, they shall not prevail—up and slay them." You can do all things through Him who loved you and died for you—through Him who is your strength and your salvation. Lift up, then, the hands which hung down, oh thou weak one, tossed with tempests—and sing to the Lord, in the receiving of this bread and this wine, "Thou preparest a table for me in the presence of mine enemies." It is the very glory of your God that you should thus wax strong out of weakness, and that his strength and grace should prove sufficient for you in your hour of greatest need.

Blessed Jesus! be with us this day in this thy own ordinance. Come in all the beauty of thy holiness, and bounty of thy grace to this feast, and mayst thou be made known to thy own people in breaking of bread. Even so—Amen.

TERROR AND PERSUASION.

## A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE CHURCH OF BOOTERSTOWN,

ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 10<sup>TH</sup>, 1839,

BY THE REV. GEORGE SYDNEY SMITH, A.M.

Late F.T.C.D., Rector of Aghalurcher, Diocese of Clogher.

2 CORINTHIANS, v. 11.

“Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.”

OUR attention may be directed in these words, my brethren, to *the motive* of the Apostle, *the action* to which that motive leads him, and *the spirit* in which he does that to which he is moved. *The motive* of his address is this, that he *knows the terrors of the Lord*: one thing which he seeks to do in consequence of this knowledge of the terror of the Lord *is to persuade men*; and *the spirit* in which he seeks to be found is that of conscious honesty of purpose, and deep love for souls; manifest to God he knows his thoughts and words are—manifest to the consciences of sinners he trusts they may become.

*Knowing the terrors of the Lord!* Oh, my brethren, does not the Apostle speak as if he saw a blind man standing at the edge of a bottomless precipice, with no hand to stay his progress to destruction; he sees the wrath of God, the terrors of judgment—he thinks of an agony that never shall end, and of a fire that never shall be quenched—he sees a poor soul unarmed and unshielded, about to take its plunge—he *knows the terror of the Lord*. The power of God is known and confessed by all who think of a God at all; there is not a flower of the field that doth not shadow forth his power; there is not

a bird of the air that does not sing its hymn of glad acknowledgment to that unbounded influence; there is not a spring of life, or an impulse of motion throughout sea and land, in earth or air, that doth not proceed from his ceaseless energy. Every chance is but an instance of his providence; every contingency is a result of his harmonious but infinitely complicated laws. Human wills, capricious though they seem, follow his bidding; the thoughts of the good, the high motives of the faithful, the activity of love, the self-denial of his saints, are all the work of his Spirit. This power knows no exception: while it throws its arms around immensity, it penetrates all—the minute, the unnoticed, the evanescent, are not out of its reach. There is not one of earth's creatures which that open hand doth not sustain; “yea,” saith Jeremy Taylor, “he guides them with his eye, and refreshes them with his influence; they live on his provisions, and revere his power, and feel the force of his Almightiness.” If we could ascend to heaven, and make our bed in hell; if we could take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, we never should reach one lonely forgotten corner in which God was not,

with his wise guardianship and his tender influences. His hand of power is for ever on the wing—the mantle of his Providence is for ever flung over the populations of his countless worlds. And there is not a household or a home throughout them all, where his energy is not present, to guide, to comfort, and to sustain. And whatever you be in rank, lowly or noble, great or humble, forget not this, that at no moment are you withdrawn from that wakeful eye—in no struggle are you abandoned to self—in no secret trouble is your heart left to its own corroding loneliness—in no hour of terror are you too far from God, to ask for courage and consolation.

But pause now, and consider, my brethren. We have looked but at *the bright side of the picture*, at God's power, creating, sustaining, preserving, adorning, giving life, and light, and blessing; but have we no other proofs of his power? Does it display itself only in this way? Alas! there are such things as wrath, and fear, and punishment, and judgment, and terror; the sunshine and the thunder-cloud came from that same hand of power. Look at the revealed word, and every now and then in the history of man, there came, as it were, claps of thunder—warnings to souls to remember that the power of God is to slay and punish as well as to quicken and preserve. A storm has lately visited this land, and it is now to your ears a familiar thing—you have felt it, and talked of it, and heard of it, until it is almost forgotten. But a few short weeks have elapsed, and yet I doubt not but that it will be looked on as an exhausted topic, and that the mention of it now is late, and out of place. And this is just the reason that I like to mention it, that you may ask yourselves, why it seems now *late and out of place*? My brethren, such will not be the sentiments of any soul to which it has brought a blessing; and if it has *not brought a blessing*, is it too late to ask you *what have you done with the warning*? The

sky is again serene, and the whole earth sitteth still and is at rest; and hearts which quivered with fear are again calm and careless. Has the warning thus indeed died away? Has the wound which it may have made in the conscience become only a seared and callous scar? Which of you has become more holy, more believing, more godly, more prayerful? *It was terror from the Lord; but are men persuaded?* The Bible tells us how often God has ridden the whirlwind, and laid bare his arm; and the Bible, too, tells us why. *Why* did he command the windows of heaven to open, and the fountains of the sea to pour out their floods, and cover with the resistless tide of swelling waters the population of the globe? Noah could tell; he who warned, and preached, and testified in vain—*it was human sin*. *Why* did God rain down a fiery deluge on the devoted cities of the plain? why does the traveller see, where once stood Sodom and Gomorrah, and Admah and Zeboim, nothing now but a lonely lake, and its shores covered still with cinders, so bitter that the fish cannot live in it, and the bird of the air shuns to fly over its accursed waters? *It was human sin*. *What was it* that shook the heavens and the earth, when the Lord descended on Sinai—when the mountain quaked exceedingly, and the smoke went up from it, and there was the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words? *Why* did Jehovah give his law in blackness and darkness and tempest? *It was by reason of human sin*. “It was added,” saith St. Paul, “*because of transgressions*.” And look back at the most momentous hour of this world's history; look at the black clouds gathering over Jerusalem; look at the veil of the temple rent in twain—at the rocks of Calvary splitting into fragments—at the earth quaking to the centre! Listen to that cry of the Son of God, when his spirit burst from its earthly prison and shook the world! *And why? alas! it was for human sin*.



But the terror of the Lord which the inspired Apostle had in his thoughts was something more terrible still. His eye was on the judgment seat of Christ—his vision of the future was as that vision which his brother Apostle beheld in Patmos—he beheld the sun black as sack cloth of hair, and the moon as blood, and the stars of heaven falling even as figs in a mighty wind, and the heavens departing as a scroll rolled together, and the mountains and the isles moved out of their places, and princes crying, “hide us, hide us, from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand!” *And why this scene of terror?* The sad reply again is—*human sin.*

Who then can fathom the dark depths of sin—who can tell the blackness, the malignant poison, the infinite danger and evil of sinning against God? But to what end is all this? what can these terrors do for human sin? Do I expect to change the sinner's heart by terror, even the terror of the Lord? *Alas no! neither did the Apostle.* Weigh well his words—*knowing the terror of the Lord.* He does not say, *we alarm men*, but, *we persuade men.* The sinner may be terrified and smitten down with fear, but not *persuaded* after all.

Do you ask for proof of this? Scarcely had the last surge of the waters ebbed away from the earth, when men began again to sin, and to lift their heads against God. The smoke of Sodom was still in the air, when the cave of Zoar was defiled with sin. The echoes of the trumpet of Sinai had not died away—Moses was still in the mountain that burned—when the sinners of Israel broke the law just given in thunder, and worshipped the molten calf—and 3,000 men perished that day. And did the fearful day of Calvary soften the hearts of the Jewish people, or alarm them to repentance? *Alas!* they called down the blood, and the curse came, and they were broken and dispersed—and this

people is scattered over the world like the fragments of a mighty shipwreck, but with hearts still hard and stony, and malignant and unrepenting. And sure I am that *even in the last and greatest day of the terror of God*, when the trumpet shall summon to judgment, and the wrath of the Lamb be near, that even then, if God were to stay his hand and give time to repent, as he did to Nineveh of old—that even then, hearts would devise a way of self-deception, and the devil would teach souls to say, “peace, peace;” and the great, and the rich, and the mighty, and the royal, and the bondsman and the freeman, might be found again without hope or faith, with no oil in their lamps, or wedding garment around them!

And let me again remind you of that visitation which has swept our land, when the voice of the Lord was heard in the clouds, and we heard and felt the power of his Almightyness. I feel I may safely say, that there was not a heart of the millions that cover the face of our land that did not tremble that night as the whirlwind of God roared around their dwellings. And to me the most solemn thought connected with this calamity is, *that it was universal*; that the hearts of the careless and the godly, the infidel and the believer, of the child of God and of the child of the devil—all, *without exception, as one man, were driven to think of God that night—all were warned of wrath to come, of death, and judgment, and eternity!* It seemed as if it needed only that Jehovah should have increased but a little the power of his tempest, and the whole population of our land would have been left without a roof to cover them, or a home to shelter them! And I doubt not but that the souls of thousands longed to be able to trust in God, and thought how precious a thing it would be to be calm and quiet in those everlasting arms; and some thought of their sins, and their consciences were stung and shaken; and some resolved to lead a new life, and to walk for the future in the ways of the

Most High ; and many tried to pray, and prayer was strange to them, and when they lifted up their hands they fell down again helpless. Ah ! my brethren, it is in a time of tribulation and fear that the *value of grace* is made known, and God's children are sure to have privileges that are worth all the world could give, and the good man's house is known *to be on a rock*. I would not believe a man who told me that at such an hour of peril he felt *no shakings of conscience*. The young man whose God is pleasure, and whose home is the world, felt that the world may pass away, and that pleasure does not give protection ; and the rich man mistrusted his gold, and the proud man thought not of his superiority, nor the cunning man of his devices. Yes, my brethren, there are times when immortality casts its long shadow back on the conscience, and something tells the sinner, that God will bring him to judgment.

And here comes the important, the vital, the often asked question, what avails all this terror, these fears of an alarmed conscience ? Now, two lessons are to be learned concerning this matter ; one is that there may be sorrow for sin, alarm in the soul, fear of judgment, there may be bitter remorse—and *all of no avail* ; not bringing the sinner closer to God or nearer to faith. And the other, that until the work of faith is wrought in the soul, and the sinner becomes a believing man, there *can be no godly sorrow* for sin, none of that mourning for iniquity to which Christ himself hath promised comfort. *For there are too mistakes, two false opinions on the subject of sorrow for sin*. Some think that this is *repentance*, that if a man is terrified, and startled, and in anguish about his sin, that he is therefore penitent, that this is the necessary beginning and the sure precursor of conversion ; and the sinner whose soul has gone through this fear and pain thinks that he has gone far enough—that *he has repented*, and that he has nothing to do now, but shun sin and lead a new life for

the time to come, ‘ God is merciful and will forgive him if he sins no more.’—I have spoken to such a man of Christ's word, and of faith in the Redeemer, and I have found that he does not reject nor deny them, indeed he admits them to be excellent things ; but, he makes Christ's death and merits as a kind of makeweight to fill up what is wanting in his own performances ; and the power of the Spirit of God as a valuable help, an useful assistant to him in his own strivings to fulfil God's law. Have you ever met such a man ? They are to be met with every day. Repentance without faith is no better than the remorse of Judas, it will not cleanse away one particle of sin—it is only carnal, legal, infidel repentance, without grace or hope—without life or holiness.

Others think that a man has no title to believe until he feels the burden of his sin to be intollerable ; that when the terror of the Lord has seized him and laid him low, then he is entitled to have faith, and not until then ; that in fact there is required of the sinner, bitter grief for sin, and anxious alarm about eternal things, and sharp feelings and pangs of conscience *as preliminary steps to faith or to pardon*. And when I have delivered the blessed message of the gospel, and called upon a sinner *to believe and be saved*, I have been told by him that he did not feel the burden of sin sufficiently to warrant him to believe, that when he had *repented more and sorrowed more*, he might be entitled to believe, but not till then.—Now, doubtless it is to be allowed, that unless a man has some concern for his soul, some fear of judgment, some sense of his need of a Saviour there is no motive to faith ; there is nothing to trust Christ for, nothing to hope from believing in him—“ they that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.” But, before faith there can be *no godly sorrow*, and if a man sorrows in a godly manner, faith has begun ; and repentance is not a thing that goes before faith ; repentance

involves a change of heart, and the changed heart has faith ; faith is a part and a great and essential part of that *great change*, that new birth, that spiritual conversion which constitutes evangelical repentance. And as long as a man is unbelieving, his grief for sin is but carnal grief, and is nothing but fear of that God with whom he is at enmity ; and *that not goodly fear*, but defiling fear, hardening fear ; such fear as is joined to hatred of God ; such fear as is “ cast out by love.” And is this fear (the natural terror of conscience,) is this a step to faith in Christ ? Is this a preparation to believe ? not more than sin and misery and need are preparations and steps to Christ.

Call to mind the day of Pentecost, when the Spirit of God came with the voice of a tempest and with flames of fire ; and the superhuman words of St. Peter told fearfully on the hearts of the multitude, and their souls were stung with guilt, and they asked in alarm “ men and brethren, what shall we do ? ” *Was this repentance ?* No, for the answer of St. Peter is “ Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.” Does he mean *unbelieving* repentance, baptism *without faith*, remission of sins *without faith* ? Does he not mean rather “ *repent in faith, be baptised in faith, and receive the remission of sins through faith* ? ” Beware then of supposing that terror is repentance, or that repentance can be without faith :— *You may be alarmed without going to Christ for protection ; but you never can mourn for sin until you have gone to Christ.*

The terror of the Lord may therefore act very variously on the soul. Imagine a man overtaken by a great and mighty tempest, stricken with fear, and filled with terror, how great would be his folly if he heard of a place of shelter and safety close at hand, and did not betake himself to it ? or suppose that he preferred to gather sticks and stones out of the field, and to build a hut against the

storm ; or suppose that he remained in his tottering house, and was buried in its ruins ; or suppose that he were to lie down in despair and perish ; and yet great as this folly, far greater is that of the alarmed and overtaken sinner who does not turn to God. One man hears of the message of peace and safety but heeds it not ; another seeks to raise an edifice of his own works against the storm ; another clings to his unholy dwelling of clay until it falls on him and crushes him ; another is thrust down from fear into despair. Blessed is he who, even with doubt and trembling, flees without looking behind him, who snatches at even the chance of escape, and goes to Jesus ; and verily “ he shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest : as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, where the blast of the terrible is as a storm against the wall.”

There is doubtless, my brethren, much significancy in these words of the Apostle ‘ *we persuade men.* ’ Why does his knowledge of the terror of God, lead him to persuade men ? It was zeal for souls, love for sinners, love like the love of his blessed Master and Lord ; “ *the love of Christ constraineth us* ” saith he. And think again too of those words “ *knowing the terror of the Lord,* ” *was this all that he knew ?* Was he only acquainted with God as “ a consuming fire ? ” Oh ! my brethren, he might have said, “ *knowing the terror of the Lord, and knowing too the love of the Lord,* ” for were it not for love, there would be no ground for persuasion, no room for hope, no foundation for faith. “ I know,” saith the same St. Paul, “ I know in whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep what I have committed to him until that day.” In this knowledge of the love and of the wrath of God he seeks to persuade men.

And what is that to which he seeks to persuade ? what is the object of his persuasion ? to what does he exhort and be-

secch them? *Does he persuade them* to become alarmed at the terror of the Lord? *Does he persuade them* to deepen and strengthen their sorrow for sin, their conviction of iniquity? No. *Does he persuade them* to follow after that "holiness without which no man can see the Lord?" to depart from iniquity? to "cease to do evil and learn to do well?" No, my brethren, these are all essential things—but there is something before them all—above them all—without which they cannot be. *Does he persuade men* to make some preparation for putting faith in Christ? *Does he persuade them* to do any thing to win the favour of God? *Does he persuade them* to seek for, and wait for some voice from heaven to the ear of the heart—some light from above to shine unto the soul? *Does he persuade them* to strive after inward convictions of sin, and inward feelings of forgiveness, before they come to Jesus? No, none of these things: he persuades them,—he beseeches men, to be reconciled to God; to receive Christ as the ground and surety of reconciliation; to take pardon and salvation as a free gift; to become the righteousness of God in Christ; to accept of the work of Christ as a finished work, wanting no preparation, no preliminary step, but perfect, full and accomplished in itself; a work of salvation, coming from Christ, beginning in Christ, ending in Christ; a work comprehending all that is needful for a sinner's soul—nothing can go before it to prepare for it; nothing can follow after it to complete it. Look at the remainder of his address, in the same chapter, give ear to his entreating cry, "Be ye reconciled to God"—and he that is thus *reconciled* to God in Christ, is said to be *in Christ*; and "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things pass away from him, and all things become new," and all these new things; the new heart, the new man, the new birth—all these are of *God* who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath committed unto us the ministry

of reconciliation. These are the glorious topics of the chapter; the grounds and the ends of the persuasion of men. And the holy apostle has left to the ministers of Christ through all the ages of the church the echo of his message of love—"As ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled unto God." And woe unto him who qualifies, or restricts, or corrupts this message, who makes conditions or channels of salvation which God hath not made, who shuns to declare the whole council of God. When the ministers of God's word seek to persuade men, their prayer should be to remember in the spirit of Paul, *that they are made manifest unto God*—and to pray that *they may be made manifest to the consciences of men*—that their words may come from the fountain of God's word, and go home to the consciences and the hearts of sinners. And men do not think of this when they speak of the addresses of the ministers of religion, as they often do, with levity, or irreverence, or unfairness. How often is a discourse spoken of as long, or dull, or tedious, or deficient—in a spirit and tone which proves at least that the judgment passed, whether it be true or false, is not a forbearing, a godly, an affectionate, a spiritual judgment? that "wherein a man judgeth another he condemneth himself." When you feel disposed to criticise the style, or the doctrine, or the manner of a preacher, think first, and let the thought solemnize your judgment, whether his words may not have been uttered after many prayers; and whether he hath not called on the Spirit of God to accompany those words; and whether your prayers should not rather go up for him that his words may be the words of truth; and that his message may be the message of God; and his embassy may be an embassy for Christ, that he may be made manifest unto God, and also made manifest to your consciences.

The embassy of Christ is therefore to



beseech you by the terrors of God, and by the love of God, to be reconciled unto God. Now this means and implies that *you are enemies*, and that unless this enmity is removed, the judgment seat will be to you a scene of terror, and not of love. If you are not conscious of this enmity, if your heart now demurs and doubts this assertion that you are by nature enemies of God, even from the womb—if you are not aware of this enmity, neither can you know of His love. You cannot feel love to God unless you feel that there is in your bosom a natural principle of hatred and enmity against the Holy One and the Just. This enmity began in Paradise, and ever since those words fell from the lips of Adam, “I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid,” man has feared and shunned the presence of God, and felt a bar and an obstacle, and an hindrance between himself and the Almighty. This enmity on God’s part is removed and gone; it is slain in the death of Jesus; the door is open, and the seals of the book are loosened. We beseech you then by the fear of judgment, and by the hopes of glory, by the love of Christ, and by the wrath of the Lamb, be ye reconciled unto God; receive remission of sins; accept the righteousness of Christ; lay hold on eternal life. This hope shall not make

you ashamed; this “hope is an anchor of the soul, sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the vail,” and come what may of terror or tempest, it shall not be shaken, for it is upon the rock. We know the terror of the Lord; a storm is coming, when the Lord shall shake terribly the earth—the sea and the waves roaring, and the stars falling from the heavens. Who shall count the souls lost in that last and greatest calamity? or who shall set a price on the peace, the security of those, who, while earth is shrivelled up, and sea and sky confounded, shall be found in the desired haven, upon tranquil waters, in a place of broad rivers and streams? This is the portion of those who are persuaded; who have been reconciled *here and now*—who have not put off their souls’ welfare, until the day when account shall be demanded of the steward, and the doom of the sinner be fixed for ever! “Seeing then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons should you be in all holy conversation and godliness?” May the terror of the Lord, from which we warn you, and the salvation to which you are all invited, and the love by which we would persuade you, be made manifest to your consciences by the power of the Spirit of God. Amen.

## THOUGHTS

SUGGESTED BY EPHESIANS, vi. 13.

“ Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

When the sound of the archangel and the trump of God will be heard in the day of Christ's appearing to judge the quick and the dead, it will at once be ascertained who confessed him upon earth, and who denied him—who were his real followers, and who rendered him merely a lip service—who were the intrepid soldiers of the cross, and who were ashamed of it. Then every latent motive will be brought to light, every influencing principle will be developed, and every character exhibited in its true colours. All the subterfuges of lies resorted to by vain man will then be swept away, and nothing will abide but the word of the living God, which he now tells us is full both of mercy and judgment—mercy for all who believe—judgment for all who reject it.

If this be so, is it wise to neglect the soul, to make light of salvation, to give to the pleasures of time and sense the precious hours which ought to be employed in doing the will of Him whose service is perfect freedom? Is it wise to be satisfied with any hope, save the “good hope through grace,” which springs from saving faith?

To make known this hope, the Apostles received a commission from their Divine Master, and faithfully did they execute it—“not handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commending themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.” In doing this they endured a great fight of afflictions, and knew by experience what it was to endure hardness as

good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and to encounter the devices of Satan; and having both fought and conquered in consequence of being upheld by the arm of the Lord, they have left for our instruction the amount of their conflicts and triumphs.

In the Epistle to the Ephesians, St. Paul dwells much upon the admission of the Gentiles into the Church of Christ, and reminds them of the great blessing they enjoyed in being sealed with the holy Spirit of promise; but aware of the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the heart, he employs the knowledge which he possessed in warning them against the dangers to which they were exposed, and the conflicts in which they might be engaged. The condition and circumstances of the children of God in this world are in their general features so much alike, that the counsel which is salutary and suitable at any one period is equally so at every other, and we ought not to try and elude the force of plain precepts, by maintaining the opinion that they had reference only to the apostolic times—God's word is not thus to be frittered away. If a command enjoining a moral duty be of limited obligation, it will follow that a promise must be limited also, and this would at once reduce to very narrow limits indeed both Christian obedience and Christian consolation. In all ages divine truth has had to work its way through the determined opposition and inveterate prejudices of this sinful world, and the lovers of it have, like

their Divine Master, been despised and calumniated, and frequently persecuted even unto death. They all have learned more or less by experience, that "if any man will be a disciple of Christ, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow him." The warfare in which the true Christian is engaged, is arduous, dangerous, and incessant. It commences with the very first conviction of sin by the Holy Spirit, and it does not terminate till that awful hour in which the separation takes place between soul and body. It is maintained against a desperately wicked heart, a deceitful world, and all the fallen angels. Who, by the exercise of his natural powers, could carry it on? Not an individual of the human race. But the will to do it is as much needed as the power; and if the great head of the church did not vouchsafe both, we could have no hope.

He then who calls to the conflict prepares the armour which is as complete as infinite Wisdom can make it. There is no joint in it through which a poisoned arrow, or fiery dart may enter and inflict upon the combatant a mortal wound. As in ancient times the warrior was protected by a helmet, a breastplate, a girdle, a

shield, and a sword, and no exposed part left undefended; so it is now with the servant of Christ, who has only to come to the divine armoury, that he may freely and at once receive righteousness, salvation, truth, faith, peace, and the sure word of promise. No one piece of armour was ever sufficient to protect the whole body; and as the soul is exposed to assaults from every quarter it becomes indispensably necessary to wear "the whole armour of salvation;" no individual was ever fool enough to imagine that a portion of the armour would afford security like the whole, and when God provides a complete suit of armour for the soul, thereby proving its insecurity without it, shall any man act as if he thought himself wiser than his Maker, and make a choice of his own, vainly hoping that he will stand in the evil day—in the day when God will judge the world in righteousness? Are we engaged fighting the good fight of faith? Are we covered with the whole armour of salvation? Are we upheld in every hour of conflict? Do we hope and expect to be more than conquerors through him who loved us?

P. R.

*Kilkenny.*

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OR

## GOSPEL PREACHER.

“We preach Christ crucified—

“Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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### A SERMON,

ON THE DEATH OF HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM,

PREACHED IN CLAREMORRIS CHURCH,

ON EASTER SUNDAY, MARCH 31ST, 1839,

BY THE REV. JOSEPH D'ARCY SIRR, A. M.

1 THESSALONIANS, iv. 13, 14.

“I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.”

WE are furnished with no mean evidence of the truth of divine revelation, when we are led to perceive the wonderful power of adaptation it possesses to all the varying circumstances of man. Viewed only as an intelligent creature, it enlarges his understanding by satisfying his lofty and ardent aspirations after wisdom; viewed as a moral and responsible being, it meets him in his guilt which it removes, and in his corruption which it controuls; finding him bowed down under the weight of many infirmities, it raises him above them, and when oppressed with nervous impotence, and he seems a ready prey for the manifold temptations that encompass him,

it endues him with superhuman strength, and enables him to resist them; it sobers him in joy, and comforts him in sorrow—no system of philosophy, no code of ethics, ever thus adapted itself to the whole constitution of man.

There is no doctrine of Scripture to which this feature of adaptation more strikingly belongs than the doctrine of the Resurrection. In every aspect in which we view it, mark how wonderfully it adapts itself to our condition. I take it for granted that you are all persuaded of the fact, that Christ arose from the dead, and became the first fruits of them that slept. It is a fact established on such



incontestible evidence, often adverted to here, that we need not pause to produce it for your satisfaction anew—let us rather view the subject in its moral aspect, in its power of adaptation to man, in every possible condition in which he can be placed.

I. THE RESURRECTION OF MESSIAH PROVES HIS DIVINE SONSHIP, AND IN PROVING IT, ENNOBLES ALL WHO PARTAKE IN THE ADOPTION. The Apostle of the Gentiles describes the Gospel of God to relate to “his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of THE SEED OF DAVID *according to the flesh*, and declared to be THE SON OF GOD with power, according to the *Spirit of holiness*, (or his divine nature,) by the resurrection from the dead.” Rom. i. 3, 4. Not for a moment will we yield to those, who regard his title as Son of God, merely as a name of office; nor even to those, who pronounce it to be given to him only by reason of the miraculous conception. At the annunciation indeed it was said, “therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God;” but it was likewise said with reference to the resurrection itself, “thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.” As well might we assert, he only bore the title because he was raised from the dead, as affirm that it solely belonged to him, because of the miraculous conception. He was the Son of God because the power of the highest overshadowed the Virgin; he was the Son of God, because he was begotten from the dead; but far beyond all these circumstances, which were only earthly indications of the fact, he was the Son of God, or ere the Virgin was born, or the worlds were framed—how did the wise man ask, when speaking

of Jehovah, “what is his name, and what is his Son’s name if thou canst tell?” With man it is impossible to find out God unto perfection. The only begotten, who is in the bosom of the Father, (that is his locality from everlasting), he hath declared him—the Only Begotten of the Father was known to be such by the disciples, not by the excellence of his manhood, but by the glory of THE WORD, which they beheld, full of grace and truth, on the mount of the transfiguration. Cling to this blessed truth, for hence it is we become allied to deity—as one with Christ, the only begotten of the Father, we, as sons, receive the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The resurrection of Christ establishes the sonship of all who receive him, who are born not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, even by the Word of God, who abideth for ever. Contemplate their dignity—“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.”—Let such walk worthy even of their high original, and remember that the resurrection of the Redeemer is that, which, taking them out of their low estate, brings them into this intimate relation with the God of heaven.

II. THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST ASSURES US OF THE COMPLETE REMOVAL OF SIN. If he died for our sins, he rose again for our justification. Being raised in power he gave abundant proof that by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. If voluntarily laying down his life as a ransom for the ungodly, he had been brought under the power of death, and been therefore unable to reassume his life, no value could have belonged to his sacrifice. It

had been a vain thing to undertake the task of reversing the curse, if the curse could have abided on him. But it was impossible for him to have been holden of the pains of death—he who had the power of death, found nothing in him. The purified nature of the Son of man must first have been overthrown, as was the nature of Adam in innocence, before he could have been retained in the tomb; but over him neither the law, for he obeyed it, nor the curse, for he endured it, nor Satan, for he overcame him, nor death, for he subdued it, could exert or acquire any jurisdiction. As a personal offender, or one incompetent to save, however boldly he might have undertaken the task, he must have seen corruption; but being infinitely pure, and therefore, able to save, his soul could not be detained in hell, or the region of disembodied spirits, and accordingly he rose, even as he said, on the third day, the successful champion of the lost, the riffler of the grave, the conqueror of hell, the scape goat of the church, the Saviour of the world.

Know then, poor sinner, that in the resurrection of Christ, assurance is given unto us, that redemption is accomplished; the hand-writing of ordinances, which was contrary to us, and which was nailed to the cross, put away; the law vindicated; justice satisfied; truth maintained; the debt due by transgressors cancelled; iniquity forgiven; and the kingdom of heaven opened to all believers. Believe then and be saved; wash in the purple tide that flows from his wounded side and be clean. Herein surely is consolation for the criminal; and the doctrine of the resurrection is proved to be adapted to his wretched case—all the clamours of a

broken law, by which conscience was terrified, and despair increased, are silenced, and the soft and soothing accents of a love stronger than death, succeed to soothe and tranquillize the wounded spirit.

III. THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST IS THE TYPE AND PLEDGE OF A SANCTIFIED MANHOOD. With chilling force was the inquiry made of man, “who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?” What is impossible with man is possible with God; he has changed the Ethiopian’s skin. When the Son of God assumed a representative portion of our fallen nature, though the flesh he took, he took of a fallen woman, yet rendered it pure and spotless as his own Godhead—mortal it was, yet made he it immortal; corruptible it was, yet no corruption was it permitted to experience: its essential holiness secured it from temptations, and failure, and ruin; its sanctification throughout life was complete, therefore was it that death could not master him, and that by the energy of his very holiness, he arose from the sepulchre.

Now remember, that in fulfilling all righteousness, and maintaining all purity, he as much secured the sanctification of the church, as by the shedding of his blood he paid her ransom. It were a small thing had he only removed the guilt, and averted the punishment due to sin; this might have been all done, and yet the ransomed criminals have been left in irremediable wretchedness; to what end is it to open the prison doors, if you devote the criminal to perpetual starvation, and wretchedness? In personally enduring the sentence against sinners, and being made a curse for us, he provided also that every pardoned blood washed soul should not only have fellowship with

him in his sufferings, but experience also the sanctifying power of his resurrection. If we be buried with him by baptism into death, it is only that being made partakers of his nature, we may walk in newness of life; in his last intercessory prayer he expressly said, "for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth;" if without holiness no man can see God, so also without holiness can no man be happy. It was the desire of the Saviour's heart not only to save us from wrath, but also from sin, that, in saving us from both, he might make us supremely happy. Behold then in the risen Saviour the assurance of a sanctified felicity—is not this assurance adapted to thy case, poor contrite soul, conscious of thine infirmities and corruption! Resolutions made in thine own strength are naught, then look thou to the Holy One, who has arisen from the grave. Know him as thy life, thy strength, thine all. Thy life once hid with him in God, thou shalt be brought into the blissful experience of that divine life, which descending from the Head, circulates with assimilating power, through all the spiritual members of this body.

IV. THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST CONFERS ON THE CROSS ITS RECONCILING POWER. In vain had the Redeemer been offered up, had he not arisen from the tomb. In bursting the bands of death it was at once seen he could have been no pretender; direct proof was afforded of the truth of the Centurion's exclamation, "Truly this was the Son of God;" and the love, and benignant purpose of Deity towards rebellious man was established. Knowing now that he did arise, even as he predicted, we are prepared to enter into the import of his promise, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

The attraction of the cross is great only because the attraction of him who was crucified in weakness, and was raised in power, is so efficient and resistless. Now that he is risen he is able to appeal to the feelings of a regardless world, and to ask them can they look upon the cross where he endured such excruciating and untold agony for them, and retain their indisposition to the God of love; indulge the sins, which pierced him; and doubt any longer the love he bears them? Callous is that heart which can hear unmoved so affecting an appeal. The touching and thrilling accents of the compassionate Saviour vibrate through all the recesses of their hearts, who give a willing audience to the voice of him that speaketh from heaven. Well may the Christian minister take up, and reiterate the language of the Apostle—"All things are of God, who hath *reconciled us to himself*, by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of *reconciliation*; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, *be ye reconciled to God*." Resist not this urgent entreaty; withstand not such demonstrations of divine affection; let your eye but repose on the risen Saviour, all enmity to Him, and to the Father who sent him, and to the word he has written, and to the ordinances of his house, and to the precepts he has given, must cease. No one doctrine of Scripture is so adapted to remove the carnal enmity of man's heart, as that which brings before us the winning grace of a risen Saviour.

V. THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

ESTABLISHES THE VANITY OF ALL THAT IS EARTHLY AND CARNAL. In the light of his glory alone can we truly discern the real vanity of all, for which man now disquiets himself. His whole life presents to us but one scene of disinterested rejection of all the creature most values; and as the light which breaks forth from his risen person, justifies the moral wisdom of his self-denying course, so also does it serve to disperse the dense mist, which obscures our vision, conceals our path, and gives a temporary importance to the unsubstantial and airy nothings which we fondly grasp. When Scripture describes man as walking in vanity, it pictures him, according to the beautiful image of the Hebrew tongue, as walking in a vapor—so dense, so thick the mist, he is unconscious of the perils of the way—terrific are the precipices before him, but they are unseen—under the constant influence of optical delusions he mistakes substance for shadow, and shadow for substance. His horizon is only then gilded, the relative proportion of all objects is only then ascertained, his path is only then cleared, the dangers which threaten him discerned, the reality of divine things clearly seen, and the vista of a bright and happy futurity opened through the deceitful haze, when he gets a believing view, like Stephen, of the heavens opened and of the Son of man in his risen glory, seated at the right hand of the Father. Then is that saying fully realized, which is written. “The people which sat in darkness saw a great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.” The resurrection of Christ is thus that fact in the Gospel history, which has most abundantly brought light

to bear on life and immortality. Oh! that men were wise, that they considered their latter end, that they viewed present objects, present pursuits, and present duties in the light of the resurrection. Thus would danger be avoided—vain and unsatisfying courses be abandoned, and a happy career secured.

VI.—THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST ASSURES THE BOND SLAVES OF SATAN OF THEIR TYRANT'S DEFEAT, AND OF HIS UTTER IMPOTENCE WHEN OPPOSED TO THE LORD OF LIFE AND GLORY. Be the earthly condition of man what it may, so long as he continues under the power of the devil, so long is he the most miserable of beings. Into this sad and wretched state did the fall of the first Adam reduce us all. In yielding to the God-denying temptation by which he was first solicited to renounce his integrity, he relinquished voluntarily to Satan the sceptre of this lower world, which he had himself received to exercise for God, and became at once the vassal of the blinding Tempter. The poison was infused into his nature—it has been transmitted to us. Still does Satan as the substituted God of this world, blind the minds of those who believe not, and lead them captive at his will. Alas! that his degrading and perilous service, should by any be preferred to that of Jehovah. But blessed be the name of our redeeming God, he has subjugated Satan. The second Adam, the Lord from heaven, has overcome the subduer of man. He met him in the wilderness, defied and put him to flight. He met him in all the agony of the garden, in all the tremendous sorrows of the cross—and the prince of darkness was routed in the very hour of apparent



success. He had compassed the betrayal and crucifixion of our Lord, but in compassing his death secured his own overthrow and ruin. Messiah met him finally in the realms of the dead, and wrenching from him the sceptre of the grave, led him captive as he rose, and made a show of him openly—triumphing over him as a prostrate and vainly malignant foe. In the risen Saviour arrayed in glory, I thus behold my nature restored to more than its original condition and dignity. When first formed, the complex creature man conditionally bore the likeness of God. In his moral nature he was holy, and in his very person, created after the image of the predestinated God-man, he shone in glory like unto that which was seen on the mount of transfiguration; but possessing no natural, no permanent right, no unconditional possession of the glory, he no sooner sinned than he was disrobed of it; and the consciousness of nakedness led him to resort to an idle subterfuge to conceal his degraded appearance. When I look now on the Son of Man, however, as risen and ascended, I see him robed in enduring glory, in the full possession of unconditional, because essential blessedness—I see him at the right hand of the Father invested with power and honor—I see him as a quickening Spirit, quickening whom he will, infusing life into those who were dead in sin, destroying the evil virus that Satan had communicated, and as the new Head, the new Root, the virtual Progenitor of a holy and ransomed family, transmitting to all the sons, whom he begetteth unto God, his own uncontaminated nature. In his resurrection, therefore, I find all that is adapted to my wants as a descendant of

fallen Adam. He has regained the sovereignty, the glory, the purity which was lost—and more than regained it. But this leads us further to consider—

#### VII.—THE RESURRECTION OF MESSIAH

AS THE PLEDGE OF OUR'S, THE ASSURANCE OF GLORY TO COME. It were a small

matter to us that Christ had overcome Satan, risen from the grave, acquired sovereignty, obtained glory, were we to possess no share in his triumph. But seeing that in all this he was our representative, we are furnished with the transporting evidence, that as he is, so shall we also be—"For if the dead rise not, then is Christ not raised." But as his resurrection can admit of no doubt, no more can ours—"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." To this blessed truth our text also directs us—"If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, them also, which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Yes, in the morning of the first resurrection, the Lord my God shall come, and all his saints with him, in the full possession of glory and of sovereignty, to reduce the world anew, to the divine allegiance, exercise righteous rule over its renovated, but still mortal inhabitants; put an end to the evil power of Satan, and establish universal peace. Thus shall God be vindicated in all his ways—all his works shall praise him—the glorified church, faithful to her trust, and acting with her head, shall not only enjoy ineffable blessedness herself, but be the happy agent in communicating that happiness to others. So

shall she fulfil the original design of the Creator when he constituted man the lord of earth, and gave him dominion over the creatures around him. And so also, shall the malignant purpose of Satan fail. Oh, what a prospect is this ! a prospect capable of affording enjoyment of the most enlarged description to all those whose minds are taught of God—to comfort them under the depression of present sorrow, and pain, and trial, and temptation ; to fill them with joy in the expectation of entering themselves into the rest prepared for the people of God ; and with the most benevolent delight, while they contemplate the promised opportunity of engaging in such satisfying and diffusive beneficence. To the mourner in Zion, who grieves over the moral evil around him, it brings consolation of no ordinary kind, because it affords him the persuasion that sin, and sorrow, and sighing shall cease, and his beloved Redeemer be honoured by all. To the tempted Christian it speaks of temptation overcome, and ceased for ever ; and to him who weeps over the funeral urn of departed piety, it speaks of bliss already enjoyed by the deceased saint, and of that rapturous hour, when they who sleep in Christ shall return with him, be joined by every living believer, and enter on the perfect fruition both in body and soul of the glory to be revealed. But this remark leads us directly to the consideration of that peculiar practical feature of the doctrine referred to in the text.

VIII. THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST IS THE TRUE GROUND OF CONSOLATION WHEN AFFLICTED WITH SORROW FOR THE LOSS OF DEPARTED SAINTS. “I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, con-

cerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not as others, which have no hope ; for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also, which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.” They have only departed for a season in order to return in glory. However eminent they may have been in service, or eminent in position, we are not to sorrow as those without hope. He who endowed them for the work in which they were engaged, can never be at a loss for fitting instruments, and hope of blessing cannot with them expire ; their felicity is sure, and their return certain, and hope for them cannot become extinct. On no occasion did the sustaining power of this conviction more commend itself to our judgment than at the present period of the church’s sorrow. We now feel that the resurrection of Christ has a power of adapting itself to our circumstances under the pressure of a recent bereavement. I find peculiar solace at this moment in reflecting on this consolatory topic.—I cannot but bless God that in his wisdom and mercy he selected so solemn and animating a season for inflicting so severe a stroke upon our national church. The gracious and supreme disposer of events, in administering judicially so bitter a cup to us, in common with the whole church, was pleased to choose such an epoch of hope and comfort, as might at once remind us of the supreme happiness of the deceased, and comfort us with the conviction that the chief bishop and shepherd of our souls, will not fail to accomplish in his own way, at his own time, and by his own means, all those blessed results for his church which moved him to undergo for her the death of the cross, and to arise from the dead. The venerated

and beloved Primate of this province, having with a wonderful presentiment of his approaching end, set his house in order, was allowed to continue with us till the arrival of that holy and profitable season, which reminds us of atoning love and covenanted glory ; which abases us at Calvary only to exalt us at Olivet ; which reads to our mind all the agony of the cross, that we may enter into all the joy of our risen Master ; which brings us within the view of death in its most appalling form, that we may behold him effectually disarmed of its sting ; which conducts us to the gloomy grave, that we may behold its darkest caverns illumined by a sudden flood of glory, which brings us into the very presence of the tyrant of the brethren, that we may be the actual spectators of his discomfiture, see him trampled beneath the feet of Messiah, and learn to rejoice in the signal triumph which has been achieved over death, and him that had the power of death, that is the devil. When I contemplate the death of the sainted Prelate, who has been so lately called away from the church below, I am compelled, even as I am admonished by the sacred period of the year when it occurred, to contemplate it in the light of the cross, as illumined by the glory of the resurrection. With all the ardor of his noble and renovated spirit had he learned to repose and feed upon the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and with a hope full of immortality did he view his own approaching dissolution, confident that He who rose from the dead would cause him to share in the glory of his resurrection.— The very season, in which our bereavement has occurred, tends to enforce on us the exhortation not to sorrow as those

which have no hope, for them who are asleep, “ for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again even so them also, which sleep in Jesus, ‘ as our beloved and respected brother doth,’ will God bring with him.” If his natural body has been brought low, and committed to the ground, “ earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust,” yet from the dust shall he arise, and in his renewed and glorified flesh shall he see God, when he shall stand in the latter day upon the earth. If the Church he loved be also depressed under this visitation, and be reduced either by internal declension or external injury, to a low estate, yet shall she also arise and triumph over all the difficulties of her way, and all the enemies by whom she may be oppressed. Well may she take up her proverb and say, “ Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy ; when I fall I shall arise ; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me ; I will bear the indignation of the Lord because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me ; he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness.” The afflictive event to which I have referred, and which has cast such a gloom over the whole church is one which demands improvement. I would now endeavour to point out some profitable considerations connected with this deeply affecting providence.

I.— *Gratitude becomes us when we remember the mercy we enjoyed in having possessed so exalted and devoted a ruler over this portion of the church.* We are not to forget the past. It would ill become us to be unmindful of the grace that was bestowed on us, in having been

placed under the episcopal guidance of one, who was so eminently qualified, both by natural endowments and by gracious properties, for the faithful discharge of the apostolic office. He was a man, whose very presence commanded reverent homage—whose courteous and benevolent demeanour won the respect even of the passing stranger, while his uniform and considerate kindness secured the attachment of more intimate acquaintances. Adorning the Gospel of God his Saviour, both in public and private, he was a burning and a shining light.—Happy, thrice happy, was the church while she possessed so admirable and distinguished a Prelate. She was able to refer to him, as to one in whom her principles were exemplified, her purity embodied, her episcopacy illustrated, and her discipline duly but leniently maintained. And shall she forget to praise God for having conferred on her such a boon ! Let it not be said that “the righteous perisheth and no man layeth it to heart.” Many gracious manifestations of the Divine favor have we received through his honored servant, much good has been wrought by his means, many important objects have been accomplished under his presidency. Praise to God most high should ascend for past favors, or, insensible to our mercies, further chastening may reach us.

2. *Gratitude beomes us still, and its accompanying responsibility belongs to us also, for what we continue to possess.* If our shepherd has been removed, he has bequeathed to us an example bright as Christian rectitude can make it. He is not dead, he sleepeth—he is embalmed in the grateful recollection of the servants of God, and shall continue to be em-

balmed in their remembrance. The memory of the just is blessed—and blessed for ever shall his memory be.—For our better direction in discharging the duty which devolves on us now, and in exercising the grace of gratitude for what we still continue to possess, I must entreat to pause on some few features of that bright and holy example he has left us.

*His zeal for God and Christ* was of no ordinary fervor. In him it burned with an intense and holy flame—if of any mere man, it could with any approximation to truth be said, that zeal for the house of God eat him up, it may safely be affirmed of him ; knowing the grace of God, in truth he burned with devout ardor to communicate the knowledge of that grace to others. Afflicted by the dishonor done to the God of heaven by the profligacies and profaneness of the age, by abounding iniquity and superstition, he was zealous in promoting every project that promised, with any reasonable hope of success, to stem the tide of evil, and reduce a rebel people to the obedience of Christ, knowing both from his own experience, and from the divine testimony, that Holy Scriptures are “able to make men wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus,” he endeavoured to procure for them the widest distribution ; persuaded that “it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe,” he labored to multiply and extend preaching of the Word ; where the church failed, he provided himself for the support of the ministers he employed, and some whom he thus enabled to live while they were endeavouring to extend the knowledge of Christ crucified, and Christ risen, are by his lamented



demise deprived of all means of livelihood; remembering the precept, "train up a child in the way he shall go, and when he is old he will not depart from it," he exerted himself to secure a Scriptural education to all the children of the poor; princely were the contributions which he placed for this purpose, at the disposal of diocesan committees. Time would fail me to follow his Grace's footsteps in all the zealous labors of love, in which he was actively engaged for the promotion of the divine glory, and the real substantial good of accountable and immortal souls; suffice it to add, that his views of good were not confined to his own country. He embraced in his regard the distant heathen and the scattered Jews.

*His intelligent attachment to the Church of England* was a marked feature in his character. Some adhere to the establishment, and happy it is they do so for any reason, from a bigotry that early prejudices have engendered, clinging to rites and forms of whose origin and value they are alike ignorant, and superstitiously reposing all their hopes of heaven on their rigorous adherence to the mere ceremonies of religion; others, alas, neither acquainted with the doctrines of our holy faith, nor feeling any concern for our ordinances, can only be regarded as mere partizans, priding themselves on their hereditary churchmanship, as though it were a patent of nobility, and glorying in the senseless maintenance of a name, as though it were enough to despise others, and to cry, Lord, Lord, in order to secure the approbation of Him who loveth all that he hath made, who trieth the hearts and the reins of the children of men, and who is not to be mocked by

the flippant speech of professed friendship, when the heart is far from him. We would fain hope that both these classes of men are decreasing amongst us; to neither of them did the sainted Prelate for whom we mourn, belong—the pure and evangelical doctrines of our church were the very joy and rejoicing of his heart; her devotional services did but express the fervid piety of his spirit; and her mild and wholesome discipline was endeared to him from its correspondence as well with the general scope of Scripture, as with the usages of a pure and primitive antiquity. It was impossible to be present when he engaged publicly, in any of his official ministrations, without being persuaded of the spiritual earnestness, with which he surrendered himself to the discharge of his episcopal office. You yourselves were witnesses of the impressive solemnity, with which he threw his whole soul into the service, at the dedication of this house to Almighty God. Few amongst us, I believe, remained unmoved, when he administered with such affecting piety, the sacred rite of confirmation to our children—a more touching scene was never witnessed—who could observe the visible emotion of his spirit, without some corresponding emotion in their own, as he breathed out his ardent supplications for those on whom his hands were laid? Oh! may the God of mercy and love yet fully answer his devout petitions for all the youth, on whom, in no light, formal, or perfunctory manner, he implored the descent of the Holy Spirit.

*His inflexible integrity*, one of the rarest virtues, was perhaps manifested beyond any other in the noble character of this distinguished man of God. Some who did not enjoy the opportunity of a

close observation, might have confounded his unbending firmness of principle with obstinacy; yet grossly would they have misapprehended the tone and temper of his mind—a man who is truly obstinate finds his highest gratification in the singularity of his course, and his opposition to the judgment and advice of others. Never did his Grace, I believe, without pain and anguish of spirit, find himself compelled to dissent from the views of those whom he respected, or to decline the adoption of those expedients which they recommended. I have seen him oppressed with grief when unable to acquiesce in their suggestions; once persuaded in his conscience of the path which duty enjoined, not the whole world combined, not the solicitations of friendship, nor the fear of consequences, could cause him to swerve from it, either to the right hand or to the left—his eyes looked right on, and his eyelids straight before him—where principle was involved, no earthly inducement could persuade him to admit of compromise; all evasion was his abhorrence; he knew, that truth and rectitude required not the aid of subtlety. When most I may have had the misfortune to differ, I have been the most constrained to admire and revere—his bold and undeviating assertion of what he deemed the principles of righteousness was but an oral expression of the genuine and stirring quality of mind to which I have adverted—as he was firm in the pursuit of what was right, so also was he bold in its avowal. Even the frowns of power could not restrain the fearless utterance of his honest judgment—of this, his conduct at the trial of Queen Caroline, furnishes us with a memorable example. It is gratifying to find from the posthumous expression

of his mind, that such an experienced Christian senator as Mr. Wilberforce entered fully into the judgment which he gave—"I myself," he wrote, "see Matt. v. 32 precisely in the same light with the Archbishop of Tuam." The natural result of such a disposition, leading personally to such straightforward conduct was, to produce in him—

*An abhorrence of error in principle, and of evil in practice.* He remembered under how solemn an obligation he was "with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's Word; and both privately and openly to call upon and encourage others to do the same;" he had pledged himself, by vows of no ordinary sacredness, to pursue such a course, and the vows he thus undertook accorded with his enlightened sense of duty—he was therefore never backward, however painful the exertion, to his meek and loving spirit, openly to repress false teaching; diligently did he labor to prevent its occurrence in the pulpits under his own jurisdiction; and as a peer of parliament to prevent its sanction in the land. He pitied the deluded victims of an erring faith, and no sacrifice would have been too great for him to make, to have delivered them from their delusions. The same generous and compassionate feelings led him, not only to rebuke vice, but to seek the reclamation of the offenders; but where there is an absence of true principle we must expect a corresponding declension from the path of virtue—in seeking to correct the one, he must have endeavoured to reform the other. The tree is known by its fruits.—It rarely happens that a censor, however amiable, escapes the temptation of pride—but never in mortal did I observe—

*Such deep humility.* He knew the corruption of the human heart, and deplored it in himself. He knew the ignorance of the creature, and he was fearful of his own judgment. He listened, like a child, to all his clergy had to offer, and was ever ready to hesitate when his previous decision seemed to militate with theirs. He was ever ready to learn from the humblest curate in his diocese. Often have I been amazed at his forbearance, his modesty, and humility, when the crudest thoughts were expressed before him by men every way his inferiors. He never ventured to pronounce till after he had duly weighed. His personal simplicity corresponded with the lowliness of his mind. His habits, by taste, by inclination, and by grace, were all simple. Self-denying in all things, he hated ostentation. Formed by nature to command respect, he only sought it for his office' sake. Ennobled by birth, ennobled by station, and still more ennobled by character, he deemed himself, notwithstanding, the lowest of all, and the servant of all.

But how shall I speak of *his boundless but discriminating charity*? It was known of all—it was lauded of all. To prevent the effect which such incredible liberality might have produced on the neighbouring objects of his bounty, it was insidiously reported, by those who could not enter into the spirit of so enlarged a heart, that the streams of his generosity were supplied by resources which reached him from the state. How little likely *he* was to be thus aided and supported in his benevolent designs, by political opponents, the dupes of such a rumour never paused to inquire. But as he never sought for human applause, he was never

moved from his purpose of well-doing by the unworthy aspersions which a crooked and sinister hostility stooped to propagate. It was obvious to many, that if secret means of beneficence could thus have been acquired, it was impossible that any secret agency could have led to his personal activity in visiting the dwellings of the poor. Never slothful nor loving to slumber, I have known him to go forth, two or three hours before daylight, in inclement weather, in a dreary winter, with a tinder-box or lantern alone provided, that he might, by a personal inspection of their habitations, and a survey of the actual bed-clothes they had in use, ascertain how far the poor around him stood in need of blankets and other necessary comforts. It were easy for a man of wealth to extend eleemosynary aid, by ordering monies to be given to certain needy applicants; but a higher principle is demanded when a bed of down is to be forsaken, and a careful personal inquiry into the amount of actual want instituted, before the dawn of day. In the distribution of his charities, it is scarcely necessary to say, he knew no distinction of persons. It was enough for him to know that real penury existed, to induce him to relieve it. True to his consecration promise, he shewed himself, by God's help, "gentle and merciful, for Christ's sake, to poor and needy people, and to all strangers destitute of help," without regard to their religious profession.—Though he was an opposer of error, he was the anxious generous friend of the erring sinner. It was his earnest solicitude for the real welfare of those who erred—a solicitude evinced by his readiness to share with them of his abundance,

which most powerfully moved him to oppose their errors. When, therefore, famine or contagious fever was abroad, or when real want, more or less widely extended, arose—he showed himself, by many incontestable proofs, to have a heart feelingly alive to the distresses of his fellow-creatures—a true patriotic anxiety for their good. He felt for them, he laboured for them, he devoted his time to them, and he communicated largely to their necessities. How monstrous the perversion of mind, which could discern an enemy in so bountiful a benefactor! As allied to this disposition of mind, we must notice—

*His affectionate consideration and care for others.* I cannot trust myself to speak, or even to think at present, as I would desire, on this topic. I dare not take you to the domestic circle; I dare not speak to you of my own personal experience of his indescribable attentions to the least deserving of those who were permitted to approach him. He possessed an intuitive sense of what would prove most gratifying in attention, and most soothing in manner, and most courteous in demeanour, to all. All difference of rank was forgotten in his desire to make others feel at ease, and to afford them enjoyment. Truly, he had a tender heart; and if it beat with kindly feelings towards any, it did so towards his clergy at large. He was their father and their friend—their counsellor and their guide. He aided them by his purse, his advice and his encouragement. To the most dependent class amongst them this was especially the case. He was, emphatically, the curate's friend. He laboured earnestly to improve their condition. He

was ever ready to protect them from oppression, and to secure them in the enjoyment of their rights. They had only to open their minds to him in order to obtain the most effective sympathy. Disappointments did not discourage, and ingratitude did not diminish his zeal for their welfare. He endeavoured, with the most scrupulous anxiety, to provide the province with pious and devoted labourers; and it was the very joy of his heart, to promote them. Connected with these remarks, I may observe—

*How scrupulous he was in ordaining, sending, or laying hands upon others.* At one period, I believe, he was so sensitive on the subject, that he avoided the direct exercise of his functions—but never did he lay hands suddenly on any man. With him it was not enough to have obtained a collegiate testimonial, or certificate of theological attainment, or what is technically called a title to orders; he endeavoured to acquire a real knowledge of the spiritual character of every candidate that approached him. Much as he admired great learning and great talents, it was not these, but great piety he sought. I say not that he was always eminently successful, but this I say, he was always eminently faithful in his search. It was his prayer and anxious earnest desire to commit the ministry of the word to such men only as were worthy of the office.

I have thus endeavoured to draw a brief and general sketch of this exalted character. Imperfect must necessarily be the ablest description, and peculiarly imperfect so meagre an outline as mine. But who is competent to infuse life into any oral or written delineation of such a man? I am unwilling, however, to lose



such an opportunity of proposing for imitation—not indeed in his official relation, for with that you can have no concern—but in his Christian attainments, the virtuous example of this eminent servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. Follow him as he followed the Redeemer: emulate him in his zeal for his Master—in his attachment to the Church—in his inflexible integrity—in his abhorrence of error and of sin—in his deep humility—in his exemplary charity, and in his consideration and care for others. So shall a suitable improvement be made of the distressing dispensation. Well may we be grateful in having such a spirit-stirring example placed before our view. But,

3. *Humiliation also becomes us under the grievous pressure of such a judgment.* “A great man has fallen in Israel,” and displeasure to the church is evinced in his removal. If when a standard-bearer *fainteth* the host is disordered, and conscious at once of calamity, how much greater the disorder, how much more distressing the calamity, when the standard bearer *falleth*. Never were the armies of Israel smitten, or discouraged, or filled with mourning, but by reason of disobedience to God, or forgetfulness of him. The funeral pall which now covers the church has been spread over her, in like manner, to correct her for mercies slighted, opportunities neglected, duties forgotten. Therefore is it meet that we should humble ourselves before God, in dust and ashes, acknowledge our sin, repent of our own personal misdeeds, and bewail the evils of the church, which have thus provoked the Lord to afflict her. Not without cause, at such a crisis, when the church is so violently assaulted

without, and so treacherously abandoned within, has she sustained so heavy a loss. Be it ours, then, to mourn in secret over our declension and unfaithfulness—to remember from whence we have fallen, to repent, and do the first works, or else—it is the Chief Bishop and Shepherd of our souls who gives the warning, “I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.” Alas! alas! that we should have needed such correction; that the church herself should thus have struck the blow! A star of glorious brightness, in the right hand of our great high priest, has been quenched in night, and on our darkened path its mild and chastened light no more can shine. Yet the gloom occasioned is not total. Though judicial, the mournful dispensation is corrective—“As many as I love I rebuke and chasten; be zealous, therefore, and repent.” The very notion of correction, however, is such as to imply a restoration to favour when its end is answered.

4. *Encouragement and hope*, therefore, are offered in the very chastening. The Lord chastens always with a salutary end in view. We may not discern the end, we may not know the way by which we are led; but herein may we be confident, that he who in wrath remembers mercy, will never leave nor forsake his church—will never permit the rulers of the darkness of this world, graphically pictured under the symbol of *the gates of hell*, to prevail against her. She may be debased and humbled—she may be afflicted and tossed with tempests—she may be deprived of her most distinguished sons—her mariners may all quail, and for

many days neither sun nor stars may appear to cheer and guide her—no small tempest may lie on her, and all hope of being saved may be taken away—and yet shall a deliverer arise, as from a long slumber, and in her extremity, when the glory of her preservation shall palpably be all his own, put forth his voice of power, rebuke the winds and waves, and great shall be the calm. Faithful and true is the Church's Head—his promises all yea, and amen. His constant language is, "be not dismayed nor discouraged, O ye of little faith; lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." To him, then, with a strong and realizing faith, does it become us to look up; to him should we have recourse in our sorrow; to him appeal—which leads us at once to this final consideration—

5. *Our prayers and intercessions should abound.* Prayer should abound, that help may come from the Holy One, that mercy may be extended; and the correction may produce its salutary design.

If no trial for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous, and yet afterwards yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby, how urgent ought we to be in supplication to Him who answereth prayer, that being exercised aright by the affliction, we and the whole Church may receive abundant profit. Our God, whom we serve, is able of himself, and, without the intervention of human agency, to supply all our need for us in Christ Jesus. To prayer should ardent intercession be added. We should intercede for our rulers, that He who has the hearts of all men at his disposal may direct them, in so trying a moment, to lay aside all

private and political regards, and to select some suitable and holy man of God, on whom the royal choice may fall. On them; in the providence of God, devolves the task of providing an overseer now, for this important diocese. But though they think not so, yet resteth the decision with Him who sitteth in the heavens. He laugheth to scorn the schemes and devices of men, and accomplishes his own wise and benevolent designs, both by frustrating the evil that is at any time contemplated, and by rendering even the most obnoxious proceedings of his creatures, the instrumental occasion of blessing. Not to man, then, but to the Ruler and Disposer of all, should we have recourse in the present bitter emergency—"He giveth the word, and great is the company of the preachers." How consolatory the reflection, at such a moment, that "the lot is cast into the lap: but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." As for our rulers, so also for the object of their choice, should our intercessions ascend to heaven. An election apparently unprofitable may be made,—yet may a double portion of the Spirit descend upon Elisha. Even the prophet of Moab may be compelled to abandon his deceitful habits, and his lust for gold, and refuse "to go beyond the word of the Lord his God, to do less or more." Be therefore the present character of the ecclesiastic, who may be appointed to govern this portion of the church, what it may, and little as he may be inclined to walk in the footsteps of so godly and virtuous an example, every property of mind, every feature of character, that might render him unmeet to feed the flock of Christ, may be corrected,

and such a change pass over the spirit of his mind, as may constitute him at once a noble and polished pillar in the temple of our God. Let us then plead earnestly with the Lord, that whosoever may now be elevated amongst us to the apostolic office, may also with the office obtain, through the bounteous mercy of the Most High, the apostolic character, and be endued with apostolic grace.

It only now remains, dear brethren, that I should inquire how far you are prepared to enter into the practical considerations I have brought before you. Are you able in any wise to enter into the moral power of the truth, that "Jesus died and rose again?" Have you ex-

perienced the benefit of his precious death and passion, been quickened together with him, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus? Is the life of Christ manifested in your mortal bodies? Being crucified with Christ, have you also been raised with him, through the faith of the operation of God? Be not contented with the possession of a correct creed, but let all its blessed truths become abiding principles of action within you "Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God," and "be diligent, that you may be found of him in peace."

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OR

## GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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COMPARATIVE GLORY OF THE JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN DISPENSATIONS.

### A SERMON,

PREACHED IN ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH, DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY, APRIL 7<sup>TH</sup>, 1839,

ON BEHALF OF THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE JEWS.

BY THE REV. E. D. RHODES, B.D.

Rector of Earmington, and Curate of West Teignmouth, Devon.

2 Cor. iii. 15. 16.

“ Even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.”

THE parallel which is drawn in the chapter from which my text is taken, is well worthy our deepest and most serious attention. There is a parallel there, both of resemblance and contrast,—of resemblance, in that the law and the Gospel are both spoken of as covenants, both dictated by God, both ordained for man, both administered by man, and each of them had a glory of its own,—the glory on the face of Moses, the glory on the face of Christ.

But, if there be a resemblance between them, the contrast is more striking. The one is in the letter, the other is in the spirit, one ministering unto death, the other unto life; the one is written on tables of stone, the other on the fleshy tables of the heart; the one a ministration of condemnation, the other, a ministration of righteousness; the one had a

glory which passeth away, the other had a glory which remaineth; the one was a veiled dispensation with a veiled teacher, the other, is the open manifestation of God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

I cannot, at this time, enter at length into all the particulars either of this resemblance or contrast: I would therefore confine your attention to that part of the subject which the words of my text bring before us, and especially in connection with that people for whom we are to speak; for it is particularly, in reference to the promotion of Christianity among the Jews, that I would ask you with me to consider the meaning of these words of the apostle, “ even unto this day when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart, nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.”

Let us then, with the Lord's blessing,



consider, first, the *veiled*, and then the *unveiled* glory. secondly, inquire into that condition of men which is represented by having the vail upon their heart, and then, into that better state which is described by the heart being turned to the Lord, and the vail taken away. And may the Lord bless these truths to our souls, and quicken our hearts in considering them.

I. You are probably familiar with the remarkable story to which the apostle alludes in this text,—you are familiar with the occurrence of the vail on Moses' face, it is found in Exodus xxxiv. After that, Moses had been with the Lord, after the Lord had caused his goodness to pass before him, had revealed his name to him, had spoken to him as a man speaketh with his friend, then Moses came to declare to the people the things that God had spoken to him, and "it came to pass, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the Mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. And when Aaran and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him. And Moses called unto them, and Aaran, and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him: and Moses talked with them. And afterwards all the children of Israel came nigh, and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him in Mount Sinai. And till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a vail on his face. But when Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he took the vail off until he came out. And he came out and spake unto the children of Israel that which he was commanded. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses that the skin of Moses' face shone. And Moses put the vail upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him." Now, brethren, there is much meaning in all this. It does not apply merely to the circumstances of that time, or to the persons who then had intercourse with Moses, but it applies evidently to the whole dispensation which Moses was introducing. It is very evident, that the character of the Mosaic dispensation is represented under the form of this vail on Moses' face—its glory was veiled, and what was its glory? Glory, in reference

to God, I believe generally means the manifestation of God. In whatever measure, and in whatever way the perfections of God are made manifest, in such a measure, and in such a way, God is glorified. "The heavens declare the glory of God," because the visible creation shows forth his power and godhead; and all the works of providence and all the supplies of his bounty, manifesting his care and goodness, bespeak his glory too; and when the whole work of God shall be completed, and when he shall be beheld by his creatures face to face, and when they shall rejoice before him, brethren, then it shall be glory, full glory, an ever present, fully manifested God.

Therefore I say, just in proportion to the degree in which God is shown, in such proportion is God glorified; and just as the attributes and perfections of God are made known in any dispensation, just such is the glory of that dispensation; and therefore, whereas God, in his law, has made known his righteousness to man, whereas he unveiled the form of his perfect justice, and declared the fixed rules of truth by which the universe should be administered continually, therefore God's righteousness was the glory of the law, God's perfect justice, integrity and truth which ruled and ordered all things—this was that which God made known in the law, and called on men to behold it, and they could not behold it, they could not bear it, it was too bright for them, it was intolerable. Oh brethren, why was it so? Why was it, and how is it that when God reveals himself to us, man turns himself away from God? How was it, that Adam hid himself when he had sinned, among the trees of the garden, from God? How was it, that Isaiah cried out, "woe is me! for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts," when he beheld the glory of the Lord Jesus, and spake of him? Why was it, that Peter was overwhelmed at the sense of the present power of his Lord, and said, "depart from me, for I am a sinful man O Lord"? It was sin, brethren, sin in the life, sin in the heart, sin in the conscience;—an ever present sense of corruption, not perhaps realized in the understanding, but still felt at the heart's core—it is this that makes a man a coward

before his God. Yes, therefore it was, that when Israel heard the voice of God speaking from the mountain, in clouds and darkness and tempest, they exceedingly feared and quaked, and asked not to hear it again, lest they should die; and this it was, which, when Moses, their chosen leader, came down from the mountain, and spoke with a portion of the brightness which the Lord had given him there, this it was which made them fear; the glory of God's righteousness shone on them, and their sinful heart was afraid.

Such, brethren, was the need that God's glory should be veiled: this was the cause, why God in condescension to his people, permitted Moses to put a veil on his face, and accordingly to hide the righteousness of the law under a covering, and under veils which might render it tolerable for man.

And what is the veil? A veil is that which conceals; and therefore, that which answers the character of a veil in Scripture, must be that which conceals God, which, in a measure at least, hides his glory. And what is it, that hides God from man, what is it that can conceal the perfections of the great God from the creatures made after his own image? What is it that can enable his creatures to live in the earth he has made, in the universe he has formed and fashioned, insensible and ignorant of him? What can cause them to be alive to all other things, and not to desire or feel the glory of their God? What is this? Oh, it is the things of sight and sense, it is the visible things of the creation whereby we are surrounded, it is the material things with which we are conversant. Brethren, it is the flesh in which we dwell. The word of Scripture is plain. The Lord Jesus Christ our great High Priest, he hath opened for us a way to God, "a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." The flesh, brethren, in which the word of God dwelt, this it was which veiled his godhead, this it was which rendered it possible, that man should have contact and converse with him, and yet should live. This it was that enabled the eternal God himself, to make a full, clear, large manifestation of all his glory, and yet, present it so that sinful man might bear it, the veil of the Lord Jesus Christ, the veil in the true temple, his body was his flesh, and therefore I say, the flesh in respect of God, or the flesh in respect

of man, and all the material and visible things that are represented and characterized by the name of flesh, this is the veil which Moses put on, this is that veil which the Lord Jesus Christ put on.

In what form, then, was this veil assumed under the law? How did Moses put the veil over the glory of that revelation? Brethren, the veil of the law was, all the carnal ordinances and services, all the ceremonies and rites, all the sacrifices of the earthly tabernacle, and all the forms of the priesthood, all these things by which man in the flesh should pay fleshly service and worship to God who is a Spirit, these means and methods by which God shadowed forth the way in which the sinner should return and be brought nigh to his Lord. This was the veil, this it was which hid the glory of God's perfect and God's intolerable righteousness, concealed and softened it down, so that man could bear it. A veil is that which conceals, but we must remember, that a veil, in reference to God, while it conceals, reveals also; it is so arranged as to make known that which it hides, to make it known as far as man can bear it. This very veil of carnal ordinances and ceremonies which hid the brightness of God's righteousness, and took away the terror and fear with which the Jewish heart was overwhelmed, revealed that which it hid, yea, and all these types and shadows were preachers of the true Gospel of Jesus, they were all formed after the pattern of things in the heavens, they all made known, darkly indeed, but still savingly and completely, the sinner's state by nature, and his hope by grace.

But, brethren, this was not to be always, the glory of that dispensation was to pass away before the glory that excelleth, it was only as a preparatory to something that was to come after, as a schoolmaster to lead us to Christ. And, accordingly, all this veil which we are speaking of, the apostle says, was done away in Christ.

II. Dear brethren, surely we know something of the glory of the Gospel, we know, how here we find the substance of all that which was, shadowed forth in the law—we know, that here we find the reality of all that which was dimly promised and vainly hoped for—and we know, that here, not only is there a partial manifestation of God, not only is there a shining forth of one attribute clearly, and another imperfectly, but here is a full united declaration

of all God's perfections, even the full glory of the living God in the face of Jesus Christ, and this, brethren, is the unveiled glory of God. It does not, like the law, overwhelm the sinner with its brightness; it does not, like the law terrify the imperfect with its perfection, but it speaks of hope, it speaks of life, it speaks of resurrection, it speaks of glory. Oh, friends, the law was in the letter; but this is in the Spirit; the law made sinners to know their sins, the Gospel tells them where to obtain deliverance from them; the law declared wrath, the Gospel declares pardon; the law proclaimed God's justice, the Gospel proclaims God's mercy; the law required full unerring obedience, but it provided no help whereby that obedience might be performed; the Gospel not merely lays down the rule, but supplies the ground to walk therein; it not only opens a way to God, but it is itself the living way; it not only guides but it strengthens, yea, it makes us "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light," which Christ has purchased with his blood; therefore, whereas the revelation of righteousness was a terrible thing to the sinner, the revelation of God's love in the Gospel is a comfortable thing to the sinner: and as there was needed then a veiled dispensation that men might be able to bear the burden laid on them, every covering is taken off in the Gospel;—"the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." And this is the glory which the apostle is speaking of in the text, he says, "now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, but we all, beholding, as in a glass, the *glory of the Lord*, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord." Oh, brethren, mark the distinction between the naked revelation of God's righteousness and the free declaration of God's love. Whereas the righteousness of the law only drove the sinner farther from God, shut him up in greater darkness and deeper despair, caused him to tremble more insufferably, and made him anxious to be delivered from the presence of his God;—instead of this, the glory of God's love draws the sinner to him, conforms him to his likeness, works him up after his own image, and changes him "into the same image from glory to

glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord." in the reading of the old testament, which And this is the contrast which the apostle draws between the veiled and unveiled glory, between the ministration of death and the ministration of life, between the teacher who talked with a vail on his face, hiding the glory that was to be done away, and the teacher that came in the likeness of men, calling on man to draw near to the Father in him, and to become like *him* at his appearing, when they shall see him as he is.

"The vail is done away in Christ,"—sin is taken away, the curse is taken away, the righteousness of the law has been fulfilled, the bondage of the law has been removed, the claims of death and hell are cancelled, the claims of God upon the conscience are discharged;—the Lord Jesus Christ has encountered all, he has fulfilled all, has accomplished all,—himself becoming the surety, he has paid the debt, himself encountering the enemy, has brought out the deliverance, himself coming and meeting the strong man armed in his own palace, vanquishing him there, and spoiling his goods, has opened the prison house, carried away the gates on his shoulders, and led captivity captive; he has claimed, that the kingdom of heaven shall be opened to sinners as the representative of man, he has asserted a place for man at God's right hand, and demanded for us a place and a portion in the presence and enjoyment of God;—and this, brethren, is his glory. It is done, the work is done, it is completed, the salvation is accomplished, the vail has been taken away, the full revelation has been made, God has declared himself to man;—he has shown righteousness, but righteousness in the form of love; he has shown his love, but love under the character of righteousness; he has shown that "he can be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Brethren, the work is done, the revelation has been made.

III. I spoke of a vail just now, a vail on God's countenance, and a vail on the face of the minister of God. There is another vail which the apostle speaks of here, it is *THE VAIL ON MAN'S HEART*,—and he says, that although the Lord hath taken away the vail of the law, although all the shadows and types have passed away, and the substance hath been manifested, yet the Jews have still the vail on their hearts; their minds are blinded; for unto this



day remains the same veil untaken away; veil is done away in Christ;—"even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart." And what, brethren, is the veil on the heart? I said, just now, that the veil on God's face was a material thing, the things of sight and the things of sense, through which God was manifested and made known to his fleshly and earthly creatures; and as earthly things are the veil on God's countenance, so earthly things are the veil on man's heart; as when God uses an earthly figure in order to reveal the truth, he speaks as a veiled teacher, so, when man loves earthly things rather than the truth which God reveals, then he hears with a veiled heart; when man rests in the form rather than the substance, in the sign rather than in the thing signified, when the world is upon the heart, and the flesh is upon the heart, and the mind of man becomes a carnal mind, then the veil is there: and then, brethren, it is all in vain that God speaks plainly, and shows himself in a plain manner—it is all in vain that thunder should sound from Mount Sinai, and mercy should speak from Mount Calvary—that there should be a revelation of terror and a revelation of goodness, which the heart cannot conceive or tongue express—it is in vain that God's goodness should pass before us, and that he should come among us with treasures of mercy, and treasures of grace, and treasures of glory, too, for his weak and miserable creatures—Oh, it is all in vain, that Christ should be crucified plainly in our midst,—all is nothing worth, while the veil is on the heart. Let us look at all the false religions with which the world abounds, let us look at the Jews and their deep and inveterate obstinacy and prejudices, let us look on the heathen nations who are changing the invisible God into the form of a visible creature, and worshipping the creature rather than the Creator;—let us look on professing Christendom, on the Romanist who is inventing false mediators and false gods, who is trusting in lying vanities, and deceiving himself with vain and false dependencies,—let us look on the formal and nominal protestant, on those who maintain a pure faith and pure worship, and yet "hold the truth in unrighteousness;" let us ask, why should this be? let us ask, why they should know God and yet not honour God? why they should profess to believe in Christ, and not live according

to that faith? why they should speak well of the law and not love the law and keep the law? why they should profess christian faith and christian hope, and yet be of the world, and in the world, and have their portion and treasure here? Let us inquire, how it is, that man is blind to the light of nature and reason, deaf to the pleadings of conscience, insensible to the light of revelation, and turns a deaf ear to the voice of God though it charm never so wisely?—let us ask the question and we shall get the answer—the veil is on their heart, their heart is a carnal heart, the love of the flesh, the love of the world, the love of the creature, is there;—self-confidence, self-dependence, self-righteousness, all the various forms of self-idolatry are there, but God is not there. Oh, he has been cast down from his throne, he has been put out of his own temple, a false god has been enthroned in the heart of man, and all the noble faculties of our nature, and all our heaven-derived principles are blighted, and the life that was breathed into man by the breath of God himself is all become in bondage to the flesh, it is all compelled into the service of sin; and, therefore, it is, that the glory of the living God may pass before us, but we have neither eyes to see, or ears to hear, or hearts to feel it.

Brethren, the apostle says, "If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ who is the image of God should shine unto them;"—and if in the midst of this darkness and misery, if under this bondage, the man is still at peace, if there should be no cry for mercy, no desire of better things, and no struggle for deliverance, if there should be comfort in the present and security for that which is to come,—Oh, it is all for the worse, it only shows how dark the veil is, and how entirely it presses on the heart. The apostle Paul says, "I was alive without the law once," and how was he alive without the law? He was alive in his own fancied goodness, in his own boasted self-dependence, in his own carnal privileges—this he accounted life, and knew not that it was death in the sight of God, the veil, brethren, was upon his heart, he saw not the spirituality of the living law, he trusted and rested in the letter, and knew not that "the letter



killeth," "when the commandment came," he adds, "sin revived and I died, and the commandment which was ordained unto life, I found to be unto death." And so it is, when God's word asserts its power, when the heart is quickened to a right feeling, when the voice of conscience startles, and the suggestions of reason are listened to,—then it is, that death begins to be felt in the heart, peace is disturbed, confidence is put away, all vain dependencies are cast aside, comfort is no more heard of, hope is as a mocker, all is fear and trembling, and the awakened man begins to know how it is with him, and he begins to confess, "the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin," the law is righteous, just, and good, altogether perfect, and altogether holy, but I am miserable, and I am unclean, Oh woe is me!

Then comes the change which the apostle speaks of, he says, "when it (the heart) shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away." And when, brethren, the soul is awakened thus to a sense of its own darkness, and when there is a consent in the inner man to the righteous law of God, accompanied with an utter impotence in the inner man to keep that law, and when there is a struggle and a conflict within us, and we feel that "the good we would, we do not, and the evil that we would not, that we do," and when we are constrained to the bondage of sin and corruption, against which our heart rebels and our soul struggles, and when in the midst of this darkness and bondage, we cry out, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death;"—it is then that the vail is taken away. Brethren, what is all this, it is just the moving of God's Spirit on the disturbed elements of the chaotic universe, it is just God's Spirit brooding on the darkness and shapelessness of creation, it is just the quickenings of life in the unformed and unfashioned heart, and then God says, "let there be light, and there is light," "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into your hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Oh, brethren, when your heart is really turned to the Lord, when it knows what sin is, and wants deliverance from sin, when it knows the wrath of God, and cannot rest under the thought of his displeasure, when

it feels what the condemnation of the law is, and is terribly afraid, when it is earnest and urgent in seeking for pardon and deliverance, when it is seeking for peace, and will know no rest till it be satisfied, Oh, then it is that the Lord meets the anxious and inquiring heart, and God lifts up his light on the darkness, God unveils the face of his love, and the troubled sinner says, "thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord." And then, brethren, for disturbance there is peace, for trouble there is ease, for mourning there is the oil of gladness, for sickness there is health, for weakness there is strength, for bondage there is liberty, for terror there is hope, for subjection to death and hell and vanity, there is an entrance into God's kingdom, god's glory, and "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us," and then it is that we know what the glory of God is, then, brethren, although the vail still rests on the creation, and although the flesh still presses upon and burdens the spirit, although in all outward things we are still hid from our God, and in the flesh can have no communion with him, still the vail is taken away from the heart, we have direct communion in spirit with our God, direct access in soul to our God, continual enjoyment in heart of our God, and then unseen things appear as if they were seen, and we live by faith, and rejoice in hope as those "seeing things which are invisible,"—yes, the words of the apostle become words of instruction and power to us, "whom not having seen we love, in whom though now we see him not, yet believing we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

And now, brethren, may I not press home on you this question, whether or no this vail has been taken away from you? may I not beseech you to make this a personal inquiry, and just to ask your own hearts, whether they do indeed answer to the truth of God, whether there be an echo within you to all the words, the living words of the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Dear brethren, let me pray you to consider it as your own matter. Oh, do you just inquire, whether you have felt the power of God's law, whether you have known the sinfulness of sin, whether you have struggled for deliverance, whether you have gained pardon and peace, whether the Spirit of God has given you liberty,

whether you are walking in newness of life, whether you are passing through things temporal, as those who are looking for things eternal, whether you are quickened with Christ, raised with Christ, whether you be ascended with Christ, and your affections set on things above, and looking for, and hoping for the time, when the Lord shall come again, and when you shall live and reign with him in glory. Let me press on your hearts, this first, and most important matter. and let it not be said of you as it is said of Israel, that though the Lord hath taken away the vail from Moses' face, yet that it still rests on your hearts.

And if, brethren, you have tasted, yourself, that the Lord is gracious, may I not with confidence call on you to consider the state of the poor Jew.

And may I not with especial confidence, advocate the claims of that society for which I would speak this day. May I not ask you to look on the dispersed of Judah, and the outcasts of Israel, and may I not show you in them, evidences of God's truth, and the terrors of God's justice, and are you not ready to testify, that it is really so as the apostle speaks, that the vail is yet on their hearts? Do you not see, how they hear the law, and yet do not understand the law? How they read the prophets, and yet do not understand the prophets? Do you not see how they are aware that God is angry with them, and yet know not why he is angry with them? Is it not plain, that they are living monuments of a mysterious dispensation, and yet they cannot perceive why it is, or wherefore it is, and is not the cause plain to others, while it is hid from them? And all this blindness and ignorance on this matter, does it not show how deeply and settledly the vail is upon their heart?

But there is hope for them. There is no part in the whole word of God, which speaks plainly and fearfully of the punishment of Israel, which does not speak as plainly and as strongly of Israel's redemption. There is no curse which is not followed, and that speedily, with a more powerful word of blessing, there is no darkness that is not to give way to a light more clear, and far more blessed. We see now, "the vail is on their heart, but when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away;" and many, brethren, are the promises in Scripture, that the

heart of Israel shall be turned to the Lord. Turn to Deuteronomy xxx., and you will there learn, that when they shall remember themselves, and return unto the Lord their God, that then the Lord will bring them back into the land which their fathers possessed, and gather them, and give them new and circumcised hearts. In Acts iii. we read, that there are times of refreshing, in store for Israel, times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and that the Lord Jesus Christ is even now at the right hand of God, "exalted a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto *Israel*, and remission of sins." Read Jeremiah xxxi., and you will find there, that when Ephraim shall bemoan himself, and turn to the Lord, and shall say, turn thou me, and I shall be turned, that then, when Ephraim turns to the Lord, the Lord will turn to Ephraim, God will give him a new heart, and put in him a right spirit, will take away the heart of stone, and give him a heart of flesh, forgive his iniquities, and remember his sins no more. Look again to Zachariah xii. and there you have the promise, that the Lord will "pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first born," and in chap. xiii. we read, "in that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." And in Isaiah vi. which perhaps more clearly than any other, speaks of the misery which Israel is to endure, speaks too of blessing—"make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed. Then said I, Lord how long? And he answered, until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land." What then? "But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves, so the holy seed,

shall be the substance thereof." And then, with respect to the especial subject of my text, we read in the 25th chapter of this prophecy, "in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the *covering* cast over all people, and the *vail* that is spread over all nations; he will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces, and the rebuke of his *people* shall be taken away from off all the earth, for the Lord hath spoken it."

Brethren, the vail shall be taken away. The covering and vail shall be taken away. Oh we may now stand afar off from God, we may hide ourselves in the bushes and trees of the garden, which the Lord God hath planted, and fancy that we are hiding ourselves from God: we may close our eyes against the truth, and harden our hearts like the nether mill stone—but the vail shall be taken away. Aye, you and I, each of us—all of us, we shall all stand with unveiled faces before an unveiled God, our eyes shall see him, in our flesh we shall behold him, we shall stand face to face, and await his judgment! Oh how shall it be with us? Oh let us see that the vail is taken away now, let us labour to see God's face *now* in righteousness, that then we may awake up after his likeness, and rejoice before him.

Therefore, I say to you now, because it is by God's word, and God's Spirit, that the vail is removed from us, oh let us, by the same word and the same Spirit, seek to remove the vail from others. Let us, brethren, in respect to Israel, send out the word to them, and pray to the Spirit for them. Second the means of this Society for which I am speaking, and ask God to prosper her. God has prospered her, she has done much. Now in the sixteenth year of her full operations, she can bless God, that there are more than three thousand Jews converted, and baptized through her ministry. She can bless God, that these

are men of all classes, and all conditions, that there are among them, Jewish Rabbies, and Teachers, who are now pastors in Lutheran, and reformed churches abroad, physicians, jurists, tradesmen, mechanics, wise and simple, rich and poor, have all by God's blessing been brought to know the Lord. The word of God has circulated widely among the Jews, the old and new testament has been spread greatly, as widely as she had funds to effect it.

She can say, that schools are established, that the work of instruction is going on, a spirit of inquiry is excited: there are discussions and controversies maintained, all which tend to dissipate the darkness, and by the Lord's good pleasure, remove the vail. She can point you to the most interesting object of all her labours, to the spot most beloved of the whole earth, after which every Jewish heart must yearn, and to which the christian heart turns—Jerusalem. She can speak of her missionaries established there, she can point you to a church building there, she can say, that in a few years, if the Lord will bless her, and you will help her, she will establish the pure christian worship of our church in Jerusalem, where Israel may assemble to worship God in spirit and in truth. These and such as these, are the labours of the Society, and this, and such as this, is the measure of the blessing with which the Lord has blessed her, and it remains for you, it depends simply and entirely on you, to support her. On you rests the responsibility of helping on this work.

As you have tasted of God's mercy, as you have beheld the Lord's countenance, as you have rejoiced in the light of his grace, and hoped in the light of his glory, so, brethren, help on this work and labour of love, so make mention of Israel in your prayers, so consider Israel in your benevolence and charity, so seek to realize for yourselves the special and assured blessing, "blessed is he that blesteth thee." "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee."

THE BLOOD OF CHRIST MORE EXCELLENT THAN THAT OF ABEL.

## A SERMON,

PREACHED IN ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY EVENING APRIL 7TH, 1839.

BY THE REV. E. D. RHODES, B.D.

[ HEBREWS xii part of 24.

“The blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel.”

FOR the right understanding of the new testament, it would be well to consider to whom the writings are addressed, whether to Jews or to Gentiles. We cannot read the acts of the apostles without noticing the remarkable difference there is, between those addresses which are spoken to the Jews, and those which were delivered to the Gentiles. We cannot but feel, that those addresses which were delivered by Peter at Jerusalem, were different from those which were spoken by the apostle Paul at Athens. We cannot but perceive a striking difference between what was spoken before Festus the Roman governor, and what was spoken before Agrippa the king of the Jews. And this difference which exists so plainly in the preaching of the apostles, is no less evident in their writings. If you compare those epistles which are addressed to Jews, with those parts which are addressed to Gentiles, you shall discover a difference in the mode of reasoning, as well as in the general subjects brought under consideration—you shall find for instance, in the epistle to the Romans, which, for the most part was addressed to Jewish christians then at Rome—in the epistle to the Galatians, which, although addressed to a Gentile church, was written to Gentiles under Jewish teaching—we shall find, I say, in these epistles, as well as in those of James, of Peter, and of John, which

were almost all of them written to Jewish churches, from the way in which they are handled, the arguments advanced, the mode of reasoning prosecuted, the conduct referred to, the faults exposed, and the encouragements given, from these and other peculiar features, we shall discern a marked difference between them and the other epistles, which were addressed exclusively to Gentile churches. And perhaps if there can be any instance given where this difference is more marked than another, it is the epistle to the Hebrews, which was distinctly and especially addressed to the Jewish church. Here we meet more especially with Jewish peculiarities, and although its design and principles are truly catholic, —although from it, believers of every country may derive consolation and blessed instruction, still we have Jewish arguments, Jewish reproofs, Jewish corrections,—all the warnings, threatenings, encouragements, and blessings which it contains, have their peculiar bearing on the state and destiny of the Jewish nation. So much and so plainly does this appear, that if I were to use any portion of the word of God, to enlighten and to instruct an Israelite who was seeking for the light of divine truth, I would take up for this purpose the epistle to the Hebrews—I would call his attention to that letter, for conviction and



instruction; that he might learn thence at once the meaning of the law, the interpretation of the prophets, and the truth of the gospel.

Now it may seem that the words which I have chosen for our instruction this evening, have little of this peculiarity in them, little, apparently, of an Israelitish bearing; but I hope to be able to show that it is not so, that whatever else be their meaning, they have a distinct and particular reference to Israel—to Israel in its present and its future state; that although the blood of sprinkling, and the blood of Abel, may speak to all, yet they speak to the Israelite in particular.

Our text reads, "The blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than that of Abel." There is a contrast, you perceive, presented to us, between the blood of Christ and the blood of Abel, but wherever there is a contrast, there is a resemblance also. We never contrast things which have not in some point a connexion; a resemblance. If there be not some particulars in which they are alike, we can find no profit in pointing out those particulars, in which they differ. If the blood of sprinkling speak *better* things than the blood of Abel, we must infer that in some respects it speaks the *same* things as that of Abel's. Let, then, our present inquiry be, what the particulars are in which these two speak the same things, and in what particular the blood of sprinkling transcends the blood of Abel—in what respect it speaks generally to all, and in what respect it speaks particularly to that Jewish church, to whom the apostle has written the epistle, in which these words occur.

We are at no loss to know what the blood of Abel speaks. It speaks of sin, it speaks of guilt, it speaks of vengeance. Does not the blood of sprinkling speak the same? If we want a proof that man was a sinful fallen creature, if we want evidence, that "sin has come into the world, and death by sin;" have we not proof Gen. iv.

in the murder of Abel—have we not the evidence there? there we read that there were two brethren in the world, and but two! conceived in the same womb, born of the same parent, nursed at the same breast, brought up in the same house, with the same nurture, the same admonition; they walked together, they lived together, they were the sharers of each other's labours, cares, and toils, participating in each other's joys and sorrows; they were companions one of another; they had no other friend; no rival; and yet one rose up against the other, and slew him! Now were you present there, and could you but look on that murdered corpse, weltering in blood,—could you but look on the face of the murderer, and mark the characters of hell which were written there, would you need further proof, that man was a fallen creature? would you ask any other evidence, to prove, that what was spoken has come to pass? "I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed," enmity even unto death. Oh, brethren! surely here is proof, that man has fallen; here is proof of man's deep corruption; and yet there is other and clearer proof than this. When we look on Him who was all righteous and all pure, when we look upon Him who did all things well, who endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, while he upbraided none; when we see the Just One lifted up on the tree, nailed to the cross—and when we ask who did all this? and when we are informed that it was his brethren—"that he came unto his own, and his own received him not," but that they rose up against him, and crucified him; when we consider all the varied ways in which human guilt was shown in that transaction; surely we must see that man has fallen. When we know what it was which caused the death of the Holy One of God, that it was sin which blotted the sun out of heaven; that it was sin which hid his Father's countenance in the hour of agony; that it was sin which pierced and crushed him; which caused

him to sweat as it were great drops of blood ; that it was sin which pointed the thorns which pierced his head, and aimed the spear which was thrust into his side, and caused the Holy One to die—when we know all this, and are told that man's ruin is so complete, his destruction so entire, and his guilt so fearful, that nothing else could suffice for his redemption but the blood that was thus shed—is there not here proof that man has fallen ? does not the blood of sprinkling tell us this more emphatically than the blood of Abel ? does it not tell us that “all have sinned,” and that “The wages of sin is death !”

But the blood of Abel speaks not only of man's fall in general, but of the sin of his murderer in particular, not only proclaims the fearful ruin which was wrought in human nature, but it cries to heaven against the peculiar and aggravated guilt of Cain his brother. Every sin calls for condemnation ; all are partakers of this universal corruption ; guilt and ungodliness are universal in fallen man. But there was a special lesson taught us, concerning the peculiar guilt of the first murderer—a special condemnation was attached to that particular crime : what then was the peculiar guilt of the first murderer ? and what peculiar working of evil concupiscence was it which led to that transgression ? It was no ordinary cause—it did not merely arise from profaneness or profligacy of character : this is not the aspect which Cain's guilt presents ; there is something peculiar about it. Cain was a religious man, as men call religion ; he was not careless in the worship of God—he gave great heed to it ; he brought to God the first fruits of the earth as an offering ; he was not insensible of the favour of God—he felt much about it ; it was because God did not favour him, that he was so much provoked ; he was not indifferent to the blessing of God, and the reward of righteousness ; for because he did not obtain that blessing, and because he feared he might not receive the inheritance, “his

countenance fell.” Then Cain must not be classed among the profane and openly ungodly. Among whom, in the present day, are we to look for those who resemble him ? We are to look among the proud, among the self-righteous, and the self-dependent ; we are to look among those who are boasting in their own resources, priding themselves in their own works, rejoicing in their own strength, glorying in themselves, and despising others. Among these we are to look for the character of Cain. It was from this self-righteous spirit that he acted, when he brought to God, as a sacrifice, the fruits of a fallen world, as if unfallen ; he came before God with the works of his own hands, claiming from Him their acceptance, forgetting that he was a sinner, forgetting that himself and all his were unclean ; he came to God as if there was no such thing as sin, as if there was no need of a Saviour, no need of a sin offering ; not bearing in mind, that “without shedding of blood there is no remission ;” he came, not pleading for mercy, but expecting acceptance as a right ; and because he was not accepted, “his countenance fell. And then, instead of taking the matter into consideration, instead of looking within for the fault, and the cause of his rejection, instead of searching his ways, to see if there was any way of wickedness in him, he began to charge his God with unrighteousness, and was angry with him ; but God in mercy points out to him his transgression, and the way of escape—“if thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted, and if thou doest not well, sin (or a sin offering) lieth at the door.” God tells this proud and presumptuous man, that he would be accepted, if he approached him in the appointed way ; that he was to draw near to him in repentance, and in faith ; and if he did he would be blessed, and “have rule over his brother ;” but he would not do so ; it was the pride of his heart ; it was his selfishness and confidence in self ; it was self-idolatry in the highest form which

urged him on in his career, which led him to boast against his God—to envy, to hate, and to slay his brother; “and wherefore slew he him? because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous.” Thus, then, does the blood of Abel point out the grievous iniquity and the monstrous offence of man’s boasting in the flesh. And does not the blood of sprinkling speak the same thing? It was self-righteousness which moved Cain to murder Abel; and what was it which moved the Jews to kill Christ? Was it Pilate the Roman Judge? Was it the Roman Soldiers? Was it the poor ignorant multitude? Were these the murderers? No! they were merely the instruments in the hands of others; they were actuated not by their own free will, they were moved by the will of others—by the will of the Chief Priests, the rulers of the people, the Scribes and Pharisees; they were directed by the learned and distinguished, by those who bore rule and authority, by those who were esteemed for their high character and sanctity; it was these who stirred up the people, who overawed Pilate’s conscience; these are they who delivered Christ to be crucified, and nailed him to the cross. And as it was with Cain, “he slew righteous Abel, because his own works were evil,”—so was it likewise, with those proud and hypocritical Jews; because the Lord reproved their hollowness and hypocrisy, because he exposed the vanity of their false hopes, and false pretensions, therefore they rose up and slew him; nor does the parallel end here between the Jews and Cain. Follow that wretched man through the remainder of his story, see him touched with no remorse, hardening himself in his iniquity, standing up against God, and answering him again with stubborn heart and insolent impiety, and is not this a faithful picture of the character and conduct of the Jews? After slaying Christ, did they not put that apostle in prison, who charged home upon their heads the blood and murder of Jesus, “who with wicked hands they

crucified?” Did they not stone Stephen, who charged them as being the betrayers, and murderers of the Just One, and the persecutors of the prophets? they rose up against him like wild beasts, and fell upon him and stoned him. Is there not in this, the same hatred, bitterness, obstinacy and impenitence, which was exhibited in the character of Cain? and if they resemble Cain in their guilt, do they not also in their punishment? Was Cain driven into all nations, and sent forth as a vagabond over the whole earth? and do we not know those who are scattered into all nations, and to be found in every place throughout the whole earth? Do we not know of those who are peeled and scattered, who are a bye word and a proverb, who are wandering in every country, and find a home in none, who are ever speaking of Jerusalem as their home and ultimate hope, and yet who are never returning to Jerusalem? who are recognised by no nation, yet forming a part of all? who are reserved by God in every place, as a testimony of his wrath and judgment? If a mark was set on Cain, and a sign in his forehead, that none should hurt, or slay him, is there not a mark also put on the Jewish Nation, by which that people is kept distinct, marked, and separated from every nation? Have not that people been persecuted, abused, and evil treated? has not every man’s hand been raised up against them, and yet are they not still preserved, multiplied, and increasing in number? truly, according to their prayer, the blood of Christ is upon them and upon their children. Thus far then, is there not a parallel of resemblance? Does not the blood which was shed on Calvary, speak the same things with the blood of Abel, concerning the corruption, guilt, and punishment of the murderers? But there is a parallel of contrast also—“the blood of sprinkling speaketh better things than that of Abel.” Abel’s blood cried and was heard, it called for vengeance; but, blessed be God, the blood of Christ speaketh better

things. In Abel's death, man has an universal lesson taught him, of human corruption ; in the death of Christ, there is proclaimed the universal hope of pardon—"his blood cleanseth from all sin." Does not the blood of sprinkling speak good things to every defiled conscience, to every sinners heart? Does it not tell you, brethren, that if guilty—as indeed you are, if you be sinful—as in truth you are, if your sin hath separated you from God, and that you are deserving of death, and of hell—as verily you are—if the sinfulness of sin be revealed by the death of Jesus—if the power of death, of hell, be revealed by it, remember also, that it not only reveals sin, but contains the remedy—it speaks good things—"behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Did he not bear our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness?" If he tasted death, if he drank the cup of bitterness which his Father put into his hands, did he not do so, that he might taste death for every man? did he not take the poisoned cup out of our hands, that they who believe in him, might never taste of death? If the cross of Jesus speaks painful things to the heart of man, and opens up fearful thoughts of sin and corruption—does it not speak hope to the heart of man also? does it not tell of sin pardoned—of God reconciled—of death and hell conquered—of Satan bruised—of heaven opened—of light and immortality being brought to light? Does it not tell of that glory which is unspeakable and eternal—are not these better things? things which were spoken not to Jews only, but also to Gentiles? Yes, here is mercy and grace as large as the universe, commensurate without our misery. Yes, here is plenteous redemption for the sins of the whole world—surely the blood of sprinkling speaketh better things than that of Abel."

It speaks to us, but more especially does it speak to those Jews, to that nation, to those murderers who slew the Lord.

Deep and awful was their guilt, peculiar their sin, in setting up their own righteousness, and rejecting the righteousness of God—grievous was the punishment, and peculiar the curse, which came upon them and their country, all in fulfilment of their own imprecations—"Let his blood be upon us, and our children!"

Yet there is hope of pardon for the Jew; Christ himself prayed for them—"Father forgive them, for they know not what they do;"—there is forgiveness through his blood, even the remission of sins, for he is "exalted a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Although they have not repented—although they have not sought forgiveness—although the times of refreshing are not yet come upon them from God—although they are still in hardness of heart, and darkness of mind, yet there is mercy in store for them, even for them. Read the prophecies of these things, read those passages of Scripture, which speak of Israel's guilt, and punishment, study all the particulars of those curses which were announced against them; follow on the record, and you will find, that blessings follow the curse, as surely as the light succeeds the darkness, as surely as the summer follows the winter—the succession of the seasons is not more certain, than that God will visit his people—Jeremiah, 31. v. 35. 36. Hear what the Lord says—Zec. xii. 9. 10. "It shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem; and I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first born." There, brethren, we are told that the guilty nation, the murderers, they who have imbrued their hands in a brother's blood, "they shall look upon him whom they have



pierced, and they shall mourn," God will give them repentance, the spirit of grace and supplication shall be poured on them, they shall inquire into the cause of their dispersion, they shall look into the reason of their misery, and of their awful situation God : will meet this inquiry, he will reveal himself to their hearts, he will open up to them the cause of their misery, and he will make known to them their remedy; and so the prophet continues, "in that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." When the soldier pierced the side of Christ, there came out blood and water, "this is he who came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ, not by water only, but by water and blood." This water and this blood is "the fountain opened for all sin and all uncleanness"—it is opened not for us Gentiles only, but it is opened specially "to the House of David, and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem." There is, brethren, water to cleanse—there is blood to atone—water to wash away our sins—and blood to deliver us from the guilt of sin—water to renew man, and make him holy—blood to expiate for human guilt, and reconcile to God.—Water, which is the emblem of the Holy Spirit's work—blood, which is the emblem of the work of Jesus—"this is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood;" the water and the blood, you see, are united together, and together they must be used in cleansing the soul that is defiled by sin. Let us have them together, or let us not hope to use them at all. It is in vain we go to Christ to be made holy or righteous, that we look to him as a teacher and guide, unless we look to him as a Saviour also; and on the other hand, in vain do we look for the pardon of sin—for deliverance from the curse—in vain shall we expect to escape hell—in vain do we anticipate an entrance into heaven, unless we be delivered from the

dominion of sin, and by personal holiness be made meet for the kingdom of heaven. To look to the water without the blood, to seek holiness without an atonement, is to frustrate the grace of God; to look to the blood without the water, to expect redemption without sanctification, is to turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. Each are alike abominable before God; let us then use both together, the water and the blood; let us wash ourselves from all sin and all uncleanness. Believe, brethren, the precious things which the blood of sprinkling speaks to you, and believe, also, what it speaks to Israel; it says—"blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved."—Surely the Lord remembers Zion."—Isaiah, liv. 4—14. Yes, brethren, Zion may say—"The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me, but God makes answer, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the child of her womb? yea, they may forget—yet will I not forget thee."—Isaiah xlix. 14, 15. Brethren, the blood of Jesus speaks better things than that of Abel, and it pleads for Israel. Oh, then, shall we also not care for Israel? shall we question the efficacy of Christ's blood pleading for them? seeing its power to cure, shall we doubt its efficacy to bless also? knowing that the salvation of Israel is the fruit of the travail of our Lord's soul, shall we make light of that salvation? shall we cast from our hearts those interests which are so near and dear to the heart of Jesus? The blood of sprinkling speaketh. Brethren, take heed how you refuse to hear him how speaketh—Oh, beware how you refuse to hear what the blood of Jesus saith to you. Does it speak of guilt and corruption? Oh, let it prick you to the heart—learn not your ways from the world—flatter not yourselves in your iniquity—give heed to the divine testimony—know yourselves to be sinners—repent you in dust and ashes—"seek the Lord while he may

be 'found—call upon him while he is near.” Does the cross of Jesus tell you of love—of love unspeakable—love immeasurable, even of that love of God which was manifested in the gift of his well beloved Son, “he spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all.” Does the blood of sprinkling speak of this, and will you not hear? Will you not answer in love, and will you not yield yourselves to him? Will you not give your hearts to God? Will you not follow the Lamb, and verify in yourselves, the power of his redemption, by living unto him who died for you, and rose again? Does the blood of sprinkling speak to us of crucifying the flesh, of crucifying the world? And will you not take up your cross and crucify the flesh, and crucify the world? Will you not follow Jesus? Will you not partake of his shame here, that you may share his glory hereafter? Does the blood of sprinkling speak of charity? Remember, “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty, might be made rich.” Will you not learn from this a lesson, to love those whom your Lord loves? Will you refuse to yearn over those, whom the Lord yearns over? Will you not pray for those whom the Lord has prayed for? Shall not his agony and bloody sweat, his cross and passion, his precious death and burial, and all the marvellous story of his redeeming love—shall not all these prevail with you, to endeavour to win souls to Christ—that

“he may see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied” to endeavour especially to try the power of his blood, on those to whom that blood speaks, even the outcast people of the Lord?

I might speak much on the particular state and prospects of the Society whose cause I am called on to plead, but, brethren, I rest not the cause of this Society, on the working of its plans, the character of its operations, the variety of its means, the peculiarity of its opportunities, the extent of its endeavours, or the measure of its success—I rest it rather, on the sure word of promise which the Scriptures recite, concerning Israel, and above all, on Christ's dying love pleading for them. Brethren, he is now in the midst of you, he has been evidently set forth crucified among you; answer the call that is now made upon you, as you must in the day of judgment. Acquit yourselves of the claims of his love, as you expect to be acquitted at the judgment seat: just act as if the Lord were present here this evening: just act as if Christ were speaking to you in person—do what you can to promote the cause of God, but do all in prayer, in love to Jesus, in love for those for whom Christ died; having this object in view, your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord; it shall abundantly return in blessings to your souls: you shall be blessed, more in what you give, than in what you receive—the blessing of the God of Israel shall descend upon you, and when he visits them, he will remember you.

THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL.—REV. XIV. 6.

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Glorious Gospel of Salvation !  
Boon of love to fallen man !  
Reach thy utmost destination—  
Perfect Jesu's gracious plan.  
Spread thy radiant wings of morning—  
Rend in twain the veil of night ;  
Bear thy Spirit's chaste adorning  
To the souls devoid of light.  
Break their chains—unlock their fetters—  
Bid the ransom'd souls go free ;  
Show them where in crimson letters,  
Jesus says, " I've bled for thee."  
Show them streams of consolation,  
Flowing from the smitten rock ;  
Bid them hear the proclamation—  
Jesus says, " I stand and knock."  
Holy Book of inspiration !  
What a tree of life thou art ;  
Yielding fruits for ev'ry nation,  
Healing leaves for ev'ry smart.  
Stretch thy branches tow'rd the river—  
Wave thy boughs across the sea ;  
Those whom Jesus would deliver,  
Languish till thou set them free.  
May thy blossoms wide expanding  
Bud and bloom like Aaron's rod ;  
Fruits of heav'nly growth commanding,  
For the drooping child of God.  
May thy spicy clusters, bending,  
Drop their myrrh and cassia round ;  
Truth and mercy sweetly blending  
Consecrate it holy ground.  
Go, ye messengers of Jesus,  
Fraught with tidings from above ;  
He is with you, and it pleases  
Him to see your work of love.  
Soon the harvest's ripening bounty  
Waving on the mountain top ;  
Shall reward the lab'ers duty,  
And insure a glorious crop.  
Blow the trumpet of salvation,  
Till the list'ning isles attend ;  
And in deep humiliation  
Ev'ry knee to Jesus bend.  
Hear, ye scatter'd tribes of Zion !  
God's belov'd of Israel's stock ;  
Sion's Lamb, of Judah's Lion,  
Jesus says, " I stand and knock."

A. M. G.

# THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

## GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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No. LXXXIII.

SATURDAY, 11TH MAY, 1839.

PRICE 4D.

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REV. HUGH STOWELL, A.M.

REV. THOMAS DREW, A.B.

THE PRECIOUSNESS OF OPPORTUNITY.

### A SERMON,

PREACHED IN ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH, DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY EVENING, APRIL 21<sup>ST</sup>, 1839,

ON BEHALF OF “THE SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY FOR IRELAND,”

BY THE REV. HUGH STOWELL, A.M.

Of Manchester.

GAL. vi. 10.

“ As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”

We are furnished in this passage of Holy Scripture with an exceedingly wide field for illustration and instruction. We might take occasion from it to dwell on the condescending grace of God, in that he makes man not only the recipient but the communicator of good. We might enlarge on the ennobling nature of this distribution, constituting the people of God fellow-workers with God; and we might dilate on the importance of that distribution in the exercise of our love, which is here pointed out, in that, while the circumference of it is to be the world, the special centre of it is to be the household of faith; while we are to encompass the human race in the arms of our charity, we are to take nearest to our hearts those that are brethren in Christ Jesus. But it would be impossible, in the compass of one discourse, to grasp so much,

besides that it would lead us apart from the more immediate and interesting object that this evening bespeaks our special attention. We rather, therefore, select a single feature in the passage, and that feature is contained in the broad expression, “as we have, therefore, opportunity;” and the subject on which we shall more immediately enlarge is, *the preciousness of opportunity in relation to individuals, and in relation to communities*. And may God, in whose house we are assembled, vouchsafe his blessing on this hallowed opportunity.

By opportunity we understand, that juncture or concurrence of circumstances when something may be best done, when, probably, it can alone be done, which once passed cannot be recalled. And if time be as the grass, opportunity is as the flower of the grass, more fading as it is



more fair. It has pleased God, in the order of nature, and in the course of providence, to compass man about with natural circumstances of a critical kind, calculated to excite his watchfulness, and keep alive his diligence. Thus, we find, in the course of the seasons, if the husbandman neglect the season of seed time, the hopes of his harvest are blighted, the prospect of his toil is in vain : and thus, if the mariner allows the favouring wind and the friendly tide to pass, it is likely that the whole result of his voyage may be defeated, and danger and shipwreck may await him. In the ordinary intercourse and concerns of life, we continually find a juncture of this critical kind. There was, perhaps, a period when the fire that folds a city in devastation and ruin, was but a solitary spark, that one drop of water might have quenched ; there was a moment when the pestilence that ravages a nation, and spreads death and affright on every side, was but a garment spotted with the plague, that the least possible effort might have destroyed—but the juncture was allowed to elapse, and then water became vain, and effort became unavailing. Who is there that looks back on his early history, and marks the course he has pursued, but can trace, to his deep regret, many seasons of usefulness lost for want of diligence and watchfulness ? There are many stranded on the bleak shores of disappointment who distinguished themselves among their fellows, and grasped at the richest fruits of fortune,—they allowed the tide to turn, the day to elapse, and nothing remains for them now but bitter and bootless regret.

But, men and brethren ! it is not in relation to the trifles of time, but in relation to the stupendous realities of eternity, that we desire to press it home on your understanding and conscience—how precious is opportunity. Take, then, the broadest view of the subject : time is to the sinner his opportunity for eternity. We are placed here for a brief season, that we may determine how we may be placed hereafter, for ever. We are now making an election by which we must abide when time shall be no longer. We are every day sowing the seed which will produce hereafter a harvest that must be for ever reaping, and for ever to be reaped. We are now digging up that gulf, that shall hereafter be fixed, and across which

we can never pass—every thought, every act, every word is big with consequences, telling on eternity. We are here, brethren, to choose the world or Christ—salvation or damnation—heaven or hell ; and every man is ripening daily the moral lineaments of his soul, which, ere long, will have the stamp of the intelligibility of eternity upon them. Would to God that we were alive, every one of us, to the critical position which we hold in this narrow span—that we felt on what a ledge we are standing—that we felt what a fearful abyss was before us, and that it is now or never we must escape for our lives ! View life, as most of us view it, merely in reference to its own interests and concerns—its narrow round of sorrows, joys, disappointments, expectations, successes, and griefs,—and life is the vainest of all vain things, a vapour, a feverish dream, acting by fits and starts, and then we awake, weeping and rejoicing, and—it is gone, as a dream when one awaketh out of sleep, it is altogether a mass of contradiction, an inexplicable paradox, an intricate labyrinth. But look at time in its true light, in the light of revelation—regard it as God represents it to us, as conscience intimates it to us,—look at time as the vestibule of eternity ; consider that we are here determining our destiny hereafter, and then, indeed, this brief, uncertain span, rises up into an importance that no finite mind can overrate—then, indeed, man begins to feel and see, that he ought to live in intense apprehension that every day and every hour may land him in that eternity where there will be no more a mercy seat to approach—no more a mediator to intercede—no more blood of infinite efficacy to cleanse—no more ambassadors of peace to beseech him to be reconciled to God—no more overtures of reconciliation—no star to rise on the midnight of eternal despair : “ now, therefore, is the accepted time—now is the day of salvation,” and with some of us the shades of eternal death may be thickening around, and the day of mercy may be half closing, and there is but a step between us and an irreversible doom !

Let me, with all faithfulness and affection, press it on all those here who are trained in Sabbath schools, that as time is the opportunity for eternity, so youth is the opportunity for time. How

beautiful is every thing in season! God has ordained the seasons in lovely rotation, each has a bearing on the other, and he who sows at an improper season must reap disappointment; the stupid husbandman who attempts to scatter his seed in the autumn will sow his seed in vain; and so, in life has God placed the beautiful order and succession of the seasons, that youth is the seed time for life and for life eternal; and the young penitent who then sows the seed of faith in Christ Jesus, and love through the Spirit, that begins betimes to sow for eternity, he may expect, if spared to after life, that the seed will mature in the summer, will ripen in autumn, and that he shall come with joy in the harvest day, bringing abundant sheaves with him. Besides, my dear young friends, remember that though it is all of grace, sovereign grace, that any man repents, yet, speaking after the manner of men, (and we are speaking in the way God condescends to speak in his word,) there is an affection, a tenderness in youth that is suitable for the reception of the Gospel; your conscience is tender, your habits are unformed, you have unsophisticated ideas which a wicked world will not let long abide with you; your conscience becomes more seared, your habits more intertwined to the world, your bondage to the world becomes more intense, and alienation and estrangement from God more tremendous, and therefore to you emphatically I say, "now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." Besides, let me remind you, that these tendrils of your affection that are seeking something to cling around, if they are not taught to cling round the rock of ages, will get so twisted and entangled with the briars and thorns of the wilderness, that it will require a double effort of omnipotent grace to raise them from their grovelling, and elevate them back to God. Besides, let me call it to your minds, that even, if peradventure you should have a late repentance—that God should allow you to find grace and mercy in his sight,—yet, alas! how would the golden season of life be gone by, and you will have sown to the flesh when you might have sown to the Spirit; Satan will have had your best and brightest energies, and your Saviour and your God will have your fading and withering powers; you will give the cup of sparkling to Satan, and the lees and dregs of

your cup to Him who drank the bitter cup, that it might pass away from you. A river that pursues a short channel to the ocean can leave little verdure and bloom along its banks: but the river that flows on, expanding as it flows, and winding its silvery train through many a valley and along many a plain—that river will leave a rich beauty and bloom along its borders, refresh many a weary traveller, and gladden many a scene, ere it empty its waters into the ocean. So the Christian who betimes consecrates his faculties to his Redeemer, he shall go through the world blessed and being made a blessing, increasing in usefulness and increasing in beneficence; and when at last he merges into the waters of eternity, there will be a beautiful track, as it were of greenness, that will tell the course he pursued. Oh, what an exalted and noble object for Christian ambition, for a young man, not to live to himself, but to Him who died for him and rose again, to consecrate all he is, and all he has, to set forth the glory of God, and set forward the salvation of all men.

But, men and brethren, if time be the opportunity for eternity, and youth be the opportunity for time, there are also in the history of every sinner, and, above all, in the history of every baptized man, we hesitate not to say, special opportunities of mercy, special opportunities of repentance, known, it may be, but to his conscience and to his God, but that were decisive and critical of his condition. Yes, we believe, there are strivings of the Spirit in every baptized man, there are visitations of conscience, and there are relentings of heart and periods when almost every baptized man, like Agrippa, has *almost* been persuaded to be a Christian. We believe, that whether it may have been that a mother poured the tender accents of truth into his young ear, or a grey headed father entreated and conjured his son to "remember his Creator in the days of his youth," or whether it may have been, as that son in maturer life has listened to the powerful, thrilling influence of the word of truth, that as a two-edged sword has persuaded him, and he has trembled like Felix, and like Felix he has delayed—or it may be afterwards, on the bed of sickness, when in the silence and solitude of that scene, behind the curtains of his retirement he wept, and prayed, and pledged himself, that if

restored, he would serve God—or it may have been, as he stood by the grave side of one dear to him as his own life, and heard the words, “earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust,” that he felt in his own mind, “it is high time to awake out of sleep” and seek my God; or it may be the result of spiritual reflection, or the rebuke of a Christian friend, or a hair-breadth escape when it seemed as if the hand of God was stretched out to rescue him from the jaws of hell—but however it may have been, it was the turning point in that man’s history, the decisive hour when the balances of the sanctuary were trembling with his immortal destiny, when we might say he was almost in the narrow way, almost crossing the threshold:—if he had but pressed on a little further, if he had called on Jesus for strength which is made perfect in weakness, made one decisive effort, and laid aside every weight and whatever sin did most beset him, had he struggled, in the strength of Omnipotence, to conquer and overcome the obstacles that were in his way—devils would have gnashed their teeth, for their prey was gone; and angels would have strung their harps to the anthem of triumph that they sing to the returning penitent: but he faulted, he paused, he looked back, and, looking back, he became fixed in more than former stoney insensibility.

Yes, I may appeal to the consciences of many, whether they who are steeped and insensible and hardened in evil habits, cannot look back with bitter and hopeless regret on circumstances such as those represented; whether they do not exclaim, “Oh! that it was with us as in days past, when our consciences were tender, and our hearts subdued, that there were in us these aspirations after good, and this feeling and longing after God that we strangled when they were working into being; but now, alas, ‘the summer is past, and the autumn is ended, and we are not saved.’” “Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots, then may they do good who are accustomed to do evil.” May God preserve us from ever knowing that palsy of the spirit, that anticipated hell, that death in life, that condemnation ere sentence be pronounced!

Brethren, we believe that the day of grace may be passed before the day of life is closed—we believe that God may say of the sinner that is joined to his idols, “let him alone,” and then, indeed,

though no mortal eye can discern it, the seal of doom is on his soul, the unresisting victim of Satan is led captive at Satan’s will, the devil enters into him as he entered into Judas, and fills him full of malice, desperation, recklessness, and perhaps, utter despair. Who shall say, how many a suicide has rushed madly on his doom, in the desperate conviction that his doom was fixed, that he would, as it were, challenge and see the worst! Dear brethren, let us thank God, that we are not yet given up to a reprobate mind; but let no sinner despise the solicitations of his conscience that may now be warning him, or thrust away that hand of mercy that may now be drawing him—that warning may be the harbinger of abandonment, and that entreaty of the Spirit of God may be its last. “Behold,” says Christ, “I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.” Brethren, he is knocking at some of your hearts now, Oh, let us throw wide open the door, and welcome our blessed Master with all his pardon, his peace, and his grace.

Beloved brethren, if we have proclaimed the Saviour—if he has taken up his dwelling in our hearts—if he has translated us from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God—if he has made us of rebellious children, of aliens, members of the commonwealth of Israel—if he has renewed us that we may be his servants and soldiers, and that we may consecrate ourselves members of him as those alive from the dead—then let me remind you, that the opportunities that follow the conversion of a sinner are opportunities, tenfold precious and tenfold hallowed. The man that has begun to enter on his Christian course, looks back, and what a dreary retrospect meets his eye!—he sees talents, but they have been prostituted to ambition and vanity, he sees days of strength and health, but they have been expended in debauchery and sensuality, squandered in frivolity and mirth; for they have been spent for that which is not bread, and for that which satisfieth not—and “what fruit has he in those things whereof he is now ashamed, for the end of those things is death.” “Oh! that he could recal the past, that he could undo the mischief he has done, and have the golden season he has squandered—but in vain are regret for the past, save as they humble and



stimulate for the future. But, now brethren, that you yourselves are awakened, now that you see things in the light of truth, now that you know "whose you are, and whom you serve"—Oh! "present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service"—"as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness." Let your head and heart and hand—let time, and talent, and tongue—all you have, and all you are, be devoted without hesitation and reservation to your Redeemer and your God, and remember, this to you is the seed time of your glorious harvest. Life is yours no less than death, and life has opportunities that heaven will not possess; and the Christian may well prize life and wish to remain here below, because it is here he can glorify his Master—it is here he can pre-eminently testify his loyalty and love—it is here he may bring forth much fruit that the living vine may be glorified thereby; for in heaven there will be no lusts to deny, no adversary to overcome, no wicked world to triumph over, no powers of darkness to conflict with, no fatherless and widows to visit in their affliction, and no sad and sorrowful spirit to be cheered and comforted, no reprobate sinner to be warned, no lost world to be pitied and prayed for—there will be no children, lambs of the flock, to be taught and trained, no blessed opportunities of reaping plentifully what we have sown—and, it is no infringement on the freedom and sovereignty of divine grace, that though our rewards are irrespective of our works as to merit, they are not irrespective of our works as to measure—though from first to last we need pardon for our best services, it is no less true we shall be rewarded according to, not for, our works. In the very passage which precedes, the apostle says, "Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting"—and he says again, "he that soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly, and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

It is not to be imagined that the thief on the cross, though rescued by sove-

reign grace, shall have so lofty a seat and so bright a throne as the apostle Paul, who laboured more abundantly, notwithstanding that he renounced all dependence on works, and said. "of sinners I am chief." Yes, notwithstanding, we doubt not, that as the man who improved his five pounds was made ruler over five cities, and as the man who improved his ten pounds was made ruler over ten cities, that so, while all shall be full of happiness up to the measure of their capacity, yet, "as one star differeth from another star in glory" in the canopy of heaven, so will one glorified spirit differ from another in the measure and amount of his glory. As it has been well observed by an old divine, "Though the vessels shall be all full to the brim, and would not contain one drop more, there shall be divers compass in the measures; and therefore the one will contain more than the other, though that one will not contain a drop more as to actual fulness than what the smallest vessel possesses." Therefore, we may say, without any diminution of happiness, without any want or deficiency in the happiness of any individual, there may be a greater plenitude and abundance of happiness superadded to the faithful servant, not of merit but of grace—not *for* his works, but *according* to his works; "their works do follow them," not go before to justify, but follow to testify—to testify the truth and reality of their faith in Christ. Therefore, let me arouse you to a sense of the highest purpose for which your Saviour has spared you here below;—he spares you, not that you may accumulate more wealth, or achieve more honor for your own sakes—that you may just train up your family for this world, and provide for them abundantly, to be mill-stones about their neck to sink them deeper into destruction—but that you may traffic for your Master, as he has given you talents severally as he will according to your several ability: one talent or ten must be trafficked for by you for your Master, "that at his coming he may receive his own with usury." Were we alert and alive we should find precious opportunities occurring. How many seasons are there to drop a word for our Master, that we lose through false shame, or as we would selfishly designate it, worldly prudence and wisdom? How often does discretion hide dastardliness—



that we speak when we ought to be silent, and are silent when we ought to speak? How fast are opportunities flitting away! We come in contact, in travel, with an individual to-day—there is an opportunity to testify for our Master—through false fear, though we term it sound discretion, that opportunity passes—we never meet again, till we meet at the bar of God. There is a magnetic attractive power, that will not let man to have much to do with another, but he leaves some impression for good or evil, that he knows not how it may extend to eternity. Yes; we are so constituted, so knit together, one with another, that no man can go alone to heaven or hell—but downward to destruction, or upward to eternal life, through the power of his influence. “You are the salt of earth,” “the light of the world;” let the salt ever be diffusing its savour, be “holding forth the word of life,” that it may give light to those who are in the house; and let me remind you that there are many lost opportunities that we can recollect with bitter sorrow and regret—that we can call to remembrance, but not to improve them. There is many a child who weeps over the grave of his parent, not that he has lost his parent, but at the remembrance of the many unkind words, the disobedient looks, the want of tender consideration for which he intended to make amends—to make reparation—to repay with interest his love to his parent;—but he put it off to a future day, and that parent is beyond the reach of his kindness, sorrow and contrition. How many a friend stands beside the grave of his friend—what intensity of anguish wrings his mind! not his friendship is reproving him, but his conscience is upbraiding him—‘thou didst intend to be faithful, to warn him; you put that off till some future day, and now he is gone, and gone for ever!’

Men and brethren, we are verily guilty concerning this matter; and as it was said by a great moralist, that ‘the path to hell was paved with broken resolutions,’ we might add, ‘with lost opportunities.’ Aye, in the path to hell how many lost opportunities are strewed around. Let us mention a fact. There is a distinguished divine foremost in literary attainments and scientific intellect, but far more distinguished for his beautiful and child-like simplicity of faith and humility.

He loves to sit at the Saviour’s feet, and count all the knowledge he possesses, “as dung that he may win Christ and be found in him;” but on one occasion he was unfaithful to his Master: having spent the night under the roof of a man distinguished like himself for science and intellect, but science unconsecrated by grace, they were drawn out into the highest and most intellectual communion, and passed on from one topic to another till the night had worn far. The Christian philosopher and divine forgot or feared, or thought there was not a fitting season to put in one solemn word of warning for his Master. They parted at a late hour—they went to their respective chambers; but the Christian minister had scarcely laid his head on his pillow till he was raised by the sound of sudden bustle and alarm in the dwelling; and hastening to his door to ascertain the cause, he was thunderstruck at hearing that his host had been stricken with apoplexy and was in the agonies of death. It came over his mind as overwhelming—‘I have lost an opportunity, and I have lost it for ever!’ and he resolved in the strength and power of God that he would never let an opportunity slip again.

Men and brethren! may it rest on our minds—“whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest, Ecc. ix. 10.” If you have put off the faithful letter, write it this night—if you have put off going to warn thine acquaintance, whom it has been on your conscience you ought to warn, let not to-morrow’s sun rise till you have discharged your conscience; and if to-morrow’s sun should see the sun of your life going down, you should have that less to burden your conscience and disquiet your last hour. Oh, seize each opportunity as it flies, and let it not be sent to the master of the vineyard without bringing back fruit meet for him that dresseth it.

We hasten from opportunity in relation to *individuals*, briefly to illustrate opportunity in regard to *communities*.—We may trace the same ordination of providence in regard to communities that we have traced in regard to individuals. Yea, as far as communities can, in a political capacity, exist only in this world; in

this world they have their retribution.— Their opportunities are especially of importance; and if you take the history of nations, and compare it with the history of the nation which is recorded and chronicled in the book of God—if you take the political and civil, and ecclesiastical history of Israel, and take it as a key to unlock the intricacies of other nations in all ages, you will be able to perceive with wonderful precision, that nations have risen, come to their climax and declined, just as they have known or passed by the opportunities that God gave them, being gracious unto them, that he does after threaten them, and give them, by his providence, though not by his prophets, save as the prophets and the law speak from his lively oracles, warning of approaching destruction, and leisure and space to repent if they knew the day of their visitation.

Take two illustrations—the one of a bright, and the other of a dark character. Take, for a bright illustration, the history of the repentance of Nineveh, that mighty city, whose cry was come up before God, and whose sins seemed ripe for destruction, in so much that God determined that he would visit Nineveh with utter desolation; but in wrath he remembers mercy, he would not smite till he warned: he commissioned Jonah, and constrained the reluctant prophet to lift up his voice—“yet, forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown.” There was no intimation that Nineveh might repent and be spared—that there was mercy with God. Happy for Nineveh, she knew the day of her visitation—she took the solemn warning, the king on his throne—and however our national Atheists would denounce the interposition of a monarch and not have him to interfere with religion at all, because the kingdom of Christ is not of this world, the king of Nineveh was a better philosopher and a better divine than they; and he issued his royal proclamation, enforced it by his own example, clothed himself in sackcloth, and covered himself with ashes; the people followed the example, and obeyed the mandate of their monarch, young and old, children and mothers—and the bridegroom went out of his chamber, and the bride from her closet; the very flocks and herds deprived of their wonted meat, mingled their bleatings and lowings in the lamentation and intercession that went up from Nineveh.

It was a stupendous scene of wondrous contrition on which angels, no doubt, looked down with unutterable delight; for if they rejoice over one sinner that repenteth, how much more over the mighty nation lying in dust and humiliation? and the result was (for God is ready to forgive; and while his anger moves with limping pace, his mercy flies to meet the repenting sinner), the sword that was half unsheathed returned to its scabbard, the cloud, dark with vengeance, that impended, cleared away, and the sun of mercy and prosperity shone again on penitent and pardoned Nineveh. Happy was that city that knew her opportunity and took advantage of it ere it was past: forty days gone, her desolation would have been upon her, and her ruin great!

Take a dark illustration. Look at the favored people of God, exhibiting a series of transgression and repentance—forgiveness on God's part, and renewed rebellion on theirs; opportunities were lost, and opportunities ceased, and mercy again proclaimed. But after they had stoned one messenger, and beaten another, and killed a third, the Lord had one son, and he said,—“I will send *my* son, peradventure, they will reverence him.” He came in human form—“he came to his own and his own received him not”—“he was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not;” and he travelled through their villages, and came and lift up his voice of warning, “repent or ye shall all perish”—he looked on Jerusalem with deep compassion when he saw her hardened in her iniquity and said—“if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace—but now they are hid from thine eyes, for the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down, because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.”—“how often would I have gathered thy children, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and you would not, behold your house is left unto you desolate.”

They filled up the cup of their iniquity to overflowing, by shedding the blood of God's own Son—they invoked in their

infuriate infatuation that blood on them and on their children! and let the dark record of their woes and wanderings tell the fearful result. Their city became their sepulchre—they were driven to every corner of the earth—they were butchered and slaughtered till there was none to slay them, and sold till there was none to purchase them—they have been as vagabonds on the face of the earth—their look bespeaks them outcast and dispicable; yet, thank God, they are not without mercy, not without hope, there shall be another day, a blessed day of visitation for Israel, that she shall know, and when God shall know her again. But, brethren, how tremendous the downfall of a nation that passes by the day of her visitation, that knows not the things that belong to her peace till the night come and provoke the wrath of God to the uttermost! Oh, our country, our country, the rock of our strength!—is there christian faith and fidelity?—if that be shorn, she shall be beaten as was the champion of Israel, and the day of her glory and prosperity shall be passed. May God lead her to know the things that belong to her peace, for they are fast hastening to be hid from her eyes.

But if there be opportunities to communities in a civil point of view, there are no less opportunities to these communities in a spiritual point of view. The churches of the living God have their opportunities no less than the civil powers; churches have their occasions given them to repent, and if they fail to repent their doom must be on them. It is most true, that the Church of Christ, as a whole, can never have the gates of hell to prevail against her; and if every form of church polity were swept from the earth, there would be a professing and spiritual Church of Christ yet remaining—there would be a remnant, as there was in the deepest midnight of Papistical darkness that never was swallowed up, which we may trace, visible to the eye of man, as well as be assured that it existed invisible in the sight of God for many thousand years. But, brethren, for any branch of the Catholic Church, for our beloved branch, that branch in this country that God hath made so strong for himself, we have no guarantee of their perpetuation but their faithfulness to the high charge that her Master has given her; and, therefore, let us take one or two illustrations that may serve for admonition and

instruction. To the Church of Ephesus that was become unfaithful, He that walketh among the golden candlesticks said, "Repent, and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove the candlestick out of his place except thou repent;" and to the church at Pergamus, "Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against thee with the sword of my mouth;" and to the church of the Laodiceans, "So then, because thou art lukewarm, and nether cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." And where now are the churches at Ephesus, Pergamus, and Loadicea? There are but a few scattered fragments left of these flourishing cities, and scarcely a solitary nominal Christian, that, like a single shrub, tells where the garden of the Lord once bloomed. See how a branch may be broken off unless it be faithful, as it was said to the Gentile Church, in reference to the Jewish, when they were ready to be lifted up, "because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith, be not high minded but fear." And where now are the churches in Africa, that once flourished when the swarthy Cyprian presided over his conclave of four Archbishops? Gone, like the splendid cities in which they flourished, passed away like a dream, and not a vestige left behind! They knew not the day of their visitation, they were unfaithful to their master, and their master removed from them their candlestick. It is not the brightness and brilliancy of the candlestick, unless there be light in the sockets, that reflects lustre; and so, however beautiful a national church may be, however fair her proportions, admirable her discipline, or pure her doctrines, if they be not carried out practically and effectually, she is unfaithful to her master, and has reason to tremble. True it is, that the Church in this country has not betrayed (and thank God for it) the truth—we have the truth in her articles and formularies, and she has been a pillar and ground of the truth, and has been a witness against Popery on the one hand, and Socinianism and infidelity on the other; yet still, if her members and ministers do not imbibe that spirit of her articles and formularies, and breathe that spirit on the world around them, the day of her visitation shall soon be passed, and the day of vengeance shall soon come.



Now, to wind up the subject, we would say to any unbelieving man that has been led to come within these walls—Man, mortal man! another opportunity is granted to you this night—thou hast been told, in the name of God, that “now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation,”—thou art told, that Christ says, “ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you; for every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” “Wilt thou be made whole?” Jesus says to thee, as he did to the diseased man of old. If you be willing will he be unwilling? Do not allow self-righteousness, and the fear of being presumptuous to come in between you and your Master: look to him who is lifted up to draw all men unto him; because you have obtained mercy, obey and love; not to deserve eternal life, but because eternal life is bestowed on thee: “the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Christian brethren, have you that believe in Christ, been slothful and faithless in improving your opportunities? Have you to bitterly remember many occasions lost by you? Be more watchful sentinels, more faithful stewards—be more continually on the alert to embrace every passing occasion, and improve it to the uttermost; let not another day pass without doing what you ought to have done, and acquitting your conscience.

Let me plead with you, on behalf of the Protestant population and church of our country. Is not the present opportunity, in the history of both, a juncture big with consequences? Is it not the turning point, when she must either go down to destruction, or upward to renovated peace and prosperity? When we may see the gathering of the hosts of darkness on the one hand, and the hosts of truth on the other,—if the soldiers of Christ be not more valiant, and zealous, and active than the soldiers of Satan, what must be the result, but that in just punishment, vice and wickedness shall triumph, and truth and virtue be fallen in the streets? Surely we live in a day when worldly politicians and earthly philosophers must be astonished at the signs of the times. The tide of events is rolling on with surprising velocity; neutral ground is passing away;

men must become one thing or the other—men must choose principle or expediency—the world or Christ. Need I remind you that, emphatically it is the day of our visitation and the season of our opportunity. How long has the volcano been heaving and threatening to send forth its fiery eruption, burying all things in its flood, and almost ready to burst; but God, who stilleth the raging of the sea, the noise of his waves, and the madness of the people, hath bade it pause. And why did he bid it pause? To see if you will arise to your duty—to see if you will repent—to see if you will try to meet the emergency, and, with the strength of omnipotence, master the current of infidelity and superstition. We may look on the church as the outposts of the camp, the temple of Protestant freedom and truth. We say Protestant freedom, for, however those of another alien church have become advocates of freedom, (the wolf might as well be the advocate of the lamb,) alas, alas, we can give but little credence to their professions; for we have ever known that they sport with their victims—on their principles they can know no mercy when their victim is secure; therefore we say, for Protestant liberty, for the Church, the Catholic Church of our country, and the constitution of which she is the soul and substance! Take away our Established Church, and you take away the altar that upholds the throne, the pillars, on which rest the whole fair fabric of our rights, liberties, and laws. And, Christian brethren, we believe that the battle-field of Protestant truth and national liberty in the Church of Christ in this country is at present national education; there it is the conflict has begun, and there it is the decisive combat must be fought. Once let education be divorced from religion, or let the religion it adopts be no better than a cold heartless morality—let the precepts of Scripture be separated from the doctrines of Scripture, and you divide that which God puts together;—let there pass such a mournful change on our land, when we shall see morality without motive, precepts without principles, then we shall have a house without a foundation, a tree without a root—we shall have people brought up in practical infidelity, and they will either be the victims of a degrading superstition on the one hand, or



be the promoters of anarchy and wild turmoil on the other. We stand for Scriptural education, where the Bible is the foundation stone, the corner stone, the top stone,—the Bible in its integrity, the only standard of our faith, and the only rule of our morality,—the Bible, alike adapted to the small capacity of an infant scholar, as to the mighty intellect of a first-rate philosopher,—the Bible, that can, like the sun, shine down into a little cabin, or through a little crevice, equally as it can fill the horizon with boundless splendour.

The Bible is now, if we may so speak, the watchword and rallying point of the faithful hosts of God's elect; and therefore, when we plead with you for a scriptural society, whose object is to promote scriptural education on the day God has given us as a lever to lift up a lost world from the grossness and secularity of the week—when I plead for a society that has done as much as any institution for the amelioration of our peasantry, and the preservation of the rising generation—when I plead for a society that has two hundred and twenty-six thousand scholars on every Sabbath day beneath its fostering care, and that only needs from you enlarged means that it may enlarge its sphere of usefulness almost tenfold—when I lay before you the claims of such a society, I am persuaded that I may anticipate support in the hearts of the pious Protestants of this country; for I plead for a society as efficient as it is simple, as economical as it is zealous in interfering for its God. I believe there are many of its teachers here present, and on them depends the efficiency of the work: let them go about it in the spirit of self-de-

nial, in simple dependance on their Saviour, and under an awful sense of their responsibility: let them do all in the name of the Lord, let them watch and wait, “in the morning sow their seed, and in the evening withhold not their hand.”

And let me remind my Christian friends in affluent circumstances, that if these individuals, many of whom toil through life in the sweat of their brow, go and devote themselves to the task of training up the young in the way they should go, surely, it is a small and slight sacrifice we call on them to make, when we ask them to supply largely and liberally what is necessary to furnish to these teachers and their schools every furniture that is requisite for their full and free exercise.

Men and brethren! we will only add, you have an opportunity now afforded you of glorifying your Master, and serving your country, let it not pass in a way that would lead you to self-reproach this night: rather be enabled to say, I gave what I could when I had an opportunity to give, I remembered my Master when his cause was brought before me. It was the expression of a man of God at his dying hour, “two things in this solemn moment press most on my heart, the one my deepest sorrow, the other my highest joy: my highest joy that Christ has done so much for me; my deepest grief, that I have done so little for Christ.”

Brethren, it will be the feeling of every good man when he is dying. Oh! then, diminish that regret this night, and as you are saved by Christ, be instrumental in saving for Christ, by going to feed his lambs.

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHING.

## A SERMON

PREACHED IN ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, DUBLIN.

ON WEDNESDAY EVENING, 10TH APRIL, 1839,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE

“SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY FOR IRELAND;”

BY THE REV. THOMAS DREW, A.B.

*(Incumbent of Christ Church, Belfast.)*

1 THESSALONIANS, i. 3.

“Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father.”

It is an unspeakable privilege—yet oftentimes nigh overwhelming to the preacher, to bring the Gospel before our fellow sinners. Anxious must the pleader be that every thought and word should be weighed and sanctified by prayer, ere he speaks as an “ambassador of Christ;” but his situation is a novel one and an embarrassing one, when he is brought into an assembly where there are wise, and good, and laborious men, collected under peculiar circumstances, for the love they bear to souls, and with earnest desire for strengthening, edification, and experience.

If one wish was ever dear to my heart, it was that of standing in the midst of the friends of Sunday school instruction, of those who love God, and the poor, and the children of the poor. The blessings of many years familiar and endeared to my memory, the variety and extent of Sunday School good crowding perpetually before my mind—the love for my dear helpers, brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, pressing upon my soul—all these things combined to urge me onwards; and it was not until the summons arrived from this beloved society, that my eyes opened to the danger of such a wish, and the hazard of putting in peril that which is most dear to me; I have only then to ask pardon of God for thus presuming, even

though solicited, to speak with you—yet if love for you and your work may present a claim upon you for intercession at this time, I may hope that silent prayers may go upwards, that all who hear me, (or read what I now say,) may not have cause to regret that such a great purpose was entrusted to unworthy hands.

Yet where shall sympathy in heart and prayer be sought for, if not among our Sunday School teachers, among those who living evermore among the young and gentle, and loving, and grateful, continually are assimilating to them, under the grace of God's Holy Spirit—for it is part of our work to be as “little children” and where shall sinful man learn the lesson of Jesus, taught with the significant illustration of a child, set forth in the midst of a congregation—where shall believing man desire more love, and simplicity, and docility, than amidst the little bands of children taught of God, and glowing with affection to the Saviour? “Happy are the people that are in such a case; yea, happy are the people who have the Lord for their God!”

Sure I am, that the defence of our labors, the encouragement of our operations, and the enlargement of our machinery, need not the profound and studied toil of the philosopher, the wit

of the skilful, the research of the student, the arguments of the disputant, and the caution of the formal and the cold; the answer to every question, "why do ye thus?" may be answered briefly—"the love of Christ constraineth us!" we love what he loved, and the lambs are at once an inheritance and a trust.

It is happy for us that our purpose is one so simple and unpretending; it is true, there is at present a mighty and interesting discussion harassing the minds of men, and fomented into treachery and hostility to the Bible, by designing men—namely, whether secular teaching (so called to distinguish it from the study of the Holy Scripture,) may not be taught, (unnaecompanied by the Word of God,) to the utmost extent of human capacities to comprehend it? but we are unfettered by this consideration, and are enabled to view our Sunday duties as limited within humble yet most important bounds. We do indeed think, let them settle the questions as they will, that all education must not only be based upon the Word of God, but that it must run by parallel and by contrast with God's Word, wherever it is requisite to show that motives and actions are in unison or discord with the revealed will of God.

We rejoice however, that a great question has been agitated, demanding that the present systems of classical and general education be purified: That, 1st, school-books shall be cleansed of whatever is indecent and profane. 2nd, That teachers shall give a guarantee to the public, and especially to parents, that they will teach the children committed to their charge, in such a manner as to exhibit God's truth incessantly; that his Word be made the leaven of all education; that it run as a silver line along its borders, and as a fair stream through its various fields, gladdening, refreshing, and purifying the universal world.

And if this wide-spreading anxiety have thus possessed the hearts of parents, and raised a demand for pious teachers, we need not hesitate to ascribe to our Scriptural education societies this happy result,—they have aroused us to consider, that what is good for the poor is good for the rich, and that the Bible, like salvation, is limited to no particular class of society.

According to our grateful view, no words, no eloquence, no praise can be adequate to what we believe to be true of the Bible. With us it is precious, not

only as revealing the primeval theology of God, the only true statistics of the ancient world, and the only unerring history of nations and of kings; but in three single views which we have of the Word of God, we sum up its connection with our souls:—1st, In its *penetrative* power applied by grace *convincing* our souls,—thus we read Hebrews 4th chap. 12th v. The "Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.—2nd, in its *regenerating* power *converting* our souls; as we read James i. 18. "of his own will *begat* he us with the *Word* of truth." 3rd, the same Word by the Spirit is a remembrance and guide; Ps. cxix. 105. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."

By the same Spirit we desire to have our duties made known and clearly detailed, by this Spirit we would be comforted in our labours, for the work is a work of mystery, its results are dependent on God, therefore it must be a work of "faith," our task is urged upon us by every feeling of gratitude to God, and of benevolence to man, therefore it must be a "labor of love," and then having sown the good seed we must wait in "patience of hope," for 'of God alone cometh the increase,' and thus our comfort is great, and our expectations shall not be disappointed.

May the grace of God accompany us, and bless us, while we proceed to the various considerations connected with our subject!

I. Let us consider "*Teaching in connection with the Bible as its basis, guide, and manual,*"

II. *Teaching in connection with the duties of the Teacher.*

III. *Teaching in connection with the private feelings of the Teacher.*

I. We are to consider TEACHING IN CONNECTION WITH THE BIBLE AS ITS GUIDE, BASIS, AND MANUAL.

This must be proved by three important sub-divisions.

1. The Bible is *adapted* to the comprehension and wants of the child. In order that we may appreciate this clearly, and proceed in a way at once the most simple, unpretending and natural, try to divest your mind of all the arguments

and defences, the doubts and provocations which may ever have presented themselves, and imagine yourself in the position of some lowly individual residing far from the bustle of cities, the authoritative dogmatisms of learned men, the discussions respecting education which are so frequent and unsatisfactory, and from any opportunity of consulting with a pious friend on the absorbing question of the education of his child.

God has made (as we suppose) this humble individual the happy father of a dear child—his heart is wrapped up in his safety—he is anxious for his temporal and spiritual good; and having himself somewhat late in life been converted under the preaching of the gospel, he now finds his attention drawn to the subject of his child's mental improvement: is it not most natural, that having found the Word of God profitable to his own soul, he should open his Bible, and see if there be any thing there to the purpose—any directions, any pattern, any help? It is but natural to think, that, as this is a solemn inquiry, he will not merely look 'up and down,'—now in one place and then in another; it is but natural to think he will look at the first chapter of the first book, and proceed to investigate each chapter, at least in such a way, as that whatever may be connected with his anxious views should not escape his observation.

Now, it so happens, that this very first chapter of the Bible contains certain information, which a christian father must naturally desire to communicate to his child. His attention is accordingly struck by the importance of the information therein contained. But is it adapted for a child? Never was anything so well adapted! for in no chapter of any book that ever was written, do you find such a group of names of things wherein children are so interested, as in this very chapter; every verse teems with some object which, it is well known, belongs to those things which fascinate our little ones from the moment wherein intelligence exhibits its inquiries, and the smile of the babe recognises the parental glance, or the nurse's voice—"earth," "water," "light," "day," "night," (I repeat them in the order supplied by the verses,) "heaven," (or the sky,) "grass," "herbs," "seed," "sun," "moon," "stars," "fish," "fowl," "cattle,"

"creeping things," "man," "woman"—why, the invention of man could not have furnished a chapter more attractive and delightful! Neither child or man ever read it and forgot it. The next chapter is equally delightful, for it tells the child of Sunday, the sweet day of "rest;" and what child does not take an interest in that precious day, even though he be an ignorant and much neglected child. This chapter has also an account of "dew," of a "garden," and "precious stones," of a "river," and of "gold;" of a "tree," and its forbidden "fruit"—of God's command—of the names given by Adam to all living creatures, and of the formation of Eve. The next chapter rises in interest. No prohibition—no disobedience, could possibly be better understood by a child than this narrative of the "serpent," and of the apple. A child cannot possibly know right from wrong, without understanding the meaning of such a statement, and delighting in its details. And, assuredly, an unsophisticated and pious man, going to the Bible for such directions as I have described, would read these chapters and say, 'well, whether I find any hints or special directions in educating my child, or no, sure I am, that this delightful story would do good to my dear child; and if, as I go on, I find no direction to the contrary, I will not longer delay, but at once communicate to him all that is here so curious, so simple, and so delightful.'

But does this story indeed delight the young mind, has it a special adaptation thereto? I ask no better proof than a visit to an infant school, and there you will find no hymn more precious to their hearts, than that which contains the history of the first chapter of Genesis, summed up thus—(the last line is one we should not overlook—it is no useless appendage.)

"God made the sky that looks so blue,  
God made the grass so green,  
He made the flowers that smell so sweet,  
In pretty colours seen.  
God made the sun that shines so bright,  
And gladdens all we see,  
It comes to give us heat and light,  
*How thankful should we be!*"

I may here observe, for order sake, that such an investigator, as he proceeds, meets many similar instances of *adaptation* to the youthful mind in the story of "Cain and Abel," "the Deluge," "Noah and his Sons," the "Tower of Babel,"



"the History of the Patriarchs," including the inimitable biography of Joseph. Time would fail to enumerate the stories and touching passages which arrest attention, especially in the New Testament, where Christ in his loveliness of character, is brought before the eye; but for order sake, I would mention that the inquirer into the Bible speedily perceives ere he advances thus far, that not only is there an adaptation in the Bible, but he can perceive that there are strong grounds for his putting the Bible into the hands of his child—and this from what we call—

2. *Inferential deduction*, (i. e.) when we learn a thing not from positive command, but as a conclusion that must necessarily be drawn from certain plain premises.

There was a time when the Word of God was not committed to writing or to the press; it was then literally the "Word" merely spoken; an instance of this kind is to be found in Genesis iii. 9, where God is calling the guilty Adam from his hiding place, the Word of God pealed thus upon his affrighted ears: "Where art thou?" this was the spoken Word of God; the Word was at first merely spoken which was subsequently recorded in Genesis iv. 9th verse, "where another unhappy offender is addressed with the words, "Where is Abel thy brother?" Thus God spoke orally to man; in the same way, no doubt, God communicated his holy will, his laws and instructions to Adam, in order that Adam might communicate them to his posterity.

That Adam as a parent did so communicate them, is most probable, nay, most evident; certain it is, that his two sons, Cain and Abel, had received certain instructions with respect to the true worship of God, that Abel "pleased God," and that Cain, serving God, not as God commanded, but "rationally" as we say, just to the extent and after the manner of his own erring reason, displeased God—the offering of the elder brother was rejected—jealousy rose in his bosom, and the rational worshipper became a fratricide!

The humble investigator infers then, that here (Isaiah xxxviii. 19.) "the parent to the children made known the truth," inference becomes stronger when he advances to the history of Noah, who is

described in vi. chap. Genesis, 9th ver. as "perfect in his generations"—now adopting the idea attached to this passage by good men, and the divisions of human life introduced by a great man, we define these generations as the various stages of the life of Noah, accordingly, then Noah was "perfect" or holy in infancy, childhood, boyhood, manhood, decline of life, and senility, (or old age,) and how could this blameless life be commenced and fostered, unless under the teaching of a parent? And that Noah himself was careful to transmit similar instruction to his children, may be inferred from the reverential conduct of Shem and Japheth, recorded in Gen. ix. 23.

The case becomes plainer still when the humble inquirer arrives at the singular and eventful biography of Abraham, and of the early years of Isaac. In various passages we infer that Abraham was a pious man—wherever he went "he built an altar to the Lord," being careful to maintain "family religion;" indeed there can be no mistake in the matter, when we refer to Genesis xviii. 19. "For I know him (Abraham) that he will *command his children* and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." Hence we need not be surprised at what is recorded of the mysterious journey of Abraham with his son, to Mount Moriah; at a time when the pious father's heart was naturally weighed down with the bitterness of duty, and the sore trial of faith which he was then to undergo; at this painful moment, the beloved son of his soul respectfully inquires in the following language: "and Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I my son, and he (Isaac) said, Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? and Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering"—Genesis xxii. 7. Now here, plainly the question of Isaac proves, that he had been brought up (Ephesians vi. 4.) "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" he enquires after the necessary requisites for a sacrifice—he must then have been duly instructed in the nature and ceremonial of such, and most probably in the reference made therein to a great anti-type, while his acquiescence in his father's declaration with respect to the promises

which God would make, exhibits a pleasing trait of respect for his father, and of faith in God.

It would be easy to follow this farther: but enough has been done to show from inference that it is bounden upon a parent (and upon those who may aid the parent in this holy office) to give instruction in divine things to the young; and it might be interesting work for Sunday School Teachers to make an addition to this train of instances by seeking for more inferences in the succeeding portions of the Bible. We may, however, claim attention to one most remarkable instance, ii. Timothy, iii. part of 15—"From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus"—a passage which shows as plainly as words can express and testify, that a child may know, ought to know, and should not forget when a faithful parent, or parent's parent, or any other person in *loco parentis* (delegated by or representing the parent) bestows scriptural instruction in his early years.

But the patient, careful investigator is soon met by something more striking than mere *adaptation* or even evident inference—he finds positive commands: at first, as to a special subject—subsequently, in all matters whatsoever he finds religion must have a share, and this whenever and wherever a reasonable opportunity is afforded.

2. We consider the commands and declarations.

In Exodus xii. 26, the father is bidden to attend to the inquiries of his child, and see that he gives him a careful answer, teaching of God's goodness to his progenitors; here is evidence that a parent or teacher is (to use good Archbishop Usher's phrase) to be "on the watch to speak for God." A similar and equally pointed direction occurs in Exodus xiii. 14, but the matter reaches its highest amount of certainty, injunction and indispensability when we come to that sublime and emphatic chapter on education, the vi. chap. of Deut.; and if that chapter be rightly understood, it is an insult upon God to speak of 'separate hours for religious instruction'—meaning thereby that there can be one moment of time in which the name of God and his love, and his Christ, and his Spirit may

not be introduced, should fitting opportunity serve: and how can men teach *history* and say they will not refer to God and his doctrines—shall not the 'register of the crimes and the follies' of mankind be traced to their foul origin, the base natural heart of man?—and shall not the teacher of history avail himself of such fitting opportunity—to say that "man must be born again, and lead young hearts to pray to God to cleanse the thoughts of their hearts by the inspiration of his holy Spirit?"—and shall not honest and wise instructors expose the shallow, false, deceptive colours wherein carnal historians have clothed sinful men, and presented them as beacons to invite, rather than as the murderers of men and the disgrace of the human name?—and shall *geography* be taught without one reference to Him who made the world, who loved the world, and gave himself for it?—and will *astronomy* be taught as a thing of glittering names, and no mention be made of Him who called them into existence, and of those brighter realms where no "enemy enters in, and no friend goes out; where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest?" No, never let the day or the hour be assigned when we may not proclaim to the hearts of our dear charge.—

"There is beyond the sky  
A heaven of joy and love;  
And holy children, when they die,  
Go to that world above!"

This glorious chapter of Deuteronomy must be exhibited to all men, for its clear meaning is forgotten, and the holy, continuous, unlimited, abounding, penetrating, and purifying leaven of christian teaching is thereby disregarded: never will God's word be duly recognized till pastors and teachers, colleges and princes acknowledge this, and mourn over their long—long forgetfulness of it!

If we want further assurance, let solemn solid maxims testify—thus Ps. cxi. 10, "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom:" again, Pro. i. 7, "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge."

But would we set such reasonings aside?—would not these convince us?—then let the Saviour speak, "suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not"—and solemn was the day and memorable the occasion, the time and

the warning, when he bade his disciples "to feed his lambs,"

We have thus been enabled to show, under the divine blessing, from adaptation, inference, positive command, scriptural precept, and the special injunction of Jesus, that scriptural education must be given by all teachers; and if by all, specially, carefully, and affectionately by the Sunday-school teacher.

## II. We now consider SCRIPTURAL TEACHING IN CONNECTION WITH THE DUTIES OF THE TEACHER.

### 1. *Who are to teach?*

To this may be answered generally—*every person*, as far as it lies in the power of each, should be on the watch to say good, show kindness, and answer inquiries of every child brought within their acquaintance, were their opportunities of giving information ever so limited and transitory. Children were not intended for our amusement merely, as butts for our wit, or receptacles for whatever idle fancies may possess us; each little one is possessed of an immortal soul—is come into the school of life to be trained for eternity; and sure I am that were he admitted into the company of angels, instead of that of men, their every effort would be given to promote his spiritual interests by untiring care and watchfulness; and those alone can be regarded as the safe and sure friends of our children, who are careful not to offend in this matter. Formerly it was thought a matter of little consequence who was placed in charge of children as a servant, or what was said in the way of banter or frolic; but, thank God, it is now otherwise—and christian parents feel that the servant in charge of children should be a select and suitable person—and that no greater mischief can be indulged in than that of answering a child in folly, perverting his mind with unworthy stories, or averting his simple questions by replies ridiculous, unmeaning and heartless.

But while all are bound, in a general sense, to give instruction to each little one whom they may find thrown in their way, there are some upon whom a special obligation devolves "to train them for

the skies;" of these, parents naturally occupy the first place; and how little true love must be in the bosom of that parent who is merely anxious to supply his offspring with "the meat that perisheth" and that withholds from him the "bread of life!" alas, many parents are indifferent to their own salvation, and if they will continue so, in despite of all our pleadings, we implore of them, by the love they profess for their dear children, and as they would not have them perish here and be lost everlastingly in the world to come, we entreat of them to forward their interests by entrusting them to those who, under any circumstance, would be happy to instruct them and lead them to the bosom of Christ.

The *parent* and *pastor* must be united in mutual regard for the child of their care; the churches expect that the parent shall present the child to the pastor for baptism, and from that hour a lively interest is supposed to be excited in the pastor's bosom on behalf of the child. So it was intended by the Protestant churches, so especially by the Church of England, (a) it is not just that the connection between the pastor and lamb of the fold should be forgotten or feebly sustained. Independent of catechising, ought not sermons be occasionally and specially preached to the children of the flock? nay, might not a portion of every sermon be arranged so as that a particular address, application and admonition could be given to the younger members of the flock? thus each would receive their portion. For many sermons, however, spiritual and searching, however delightful to the heart of the believer, and convincing to the heart of the sinner, are wholly unintelligible to the younger part of the flock; surely there is room for improvement here; nor does even the faithful, teaching of Sunday-schools sufficiently supply the lack of such pulpit addresses, instructions and expositions.

But among those whose motto is to be that of Psalm xxxiv. 11. "Come ye children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord," we are to enumerate one of the most important

(a) Irish Canons xi. xii. Former charges ministers to catechize every Sunday, latter calls on them to divide catechism into 52 parts and preach on each part; 79, English Canon demands of schoolmasters to "examine children on the sermons which they have heard in church, and to train them up with such sentences of holy scripture as shall be most expedient to induce them to all Godliness".



## OR GOSPEL PREACHER.

classes of Society, *daily schoolmasters*, a body comprising many learned, holy, and competent teachers, but who, according to the most exceptionable usage of the time, are nearly an irresponsible body. It is but fair to hope that, with the clear views now gaining ground on the subject, this class of public teachers will severally afford to the parents of children entrusted to them, some certain pledge that they will be faithful in imparting Christian knowledge to the young; and be prepared to submit to each applicant a syllabus of their undertaking, not only as to languages, books, &c. but specially respecting their ideas as to what share the truths of the gospel are to receive in their course of instruction.

But the class for whom we are at present most interested, is one of the most singular developments of modern times: a number of men consisting of thousands and tens of thousands, who, "without money and without price," are the sabbatical labourers in the vineyard;—many sacrificing their only day of freedom from harassing duties and occupations, to studies and teachings often of a most laborious and perplexing kind. They pursue this occupation by sea and by land—in churches and school-houses; they descend into the damp cellar, to do good to the pale and poverty-stricken children of the poor; they climb into the garret, and bring blessings to the dwellers in rags—to those who, as children, scarcely know a parent's care, and who often flee from a parent's home to become secret thieves or midnight plunderers, when benevolence is tardy and the labourers few: yet thousands, rescued from the den of the profligate and the home of the harlot, have cause to bless God for the day when Sabbath-schools were instituted, and that such men as Raikes of Gloucester led the way to do good by the simplest and cheapest machinery ever placed in combination, and by a stimulus the most acceptable to the Christian heart, and by a success so rapid as almost to exceed credibility—for it "rose as in a night," and has grown in beauty and splendour, and is "still shining on more and more unto the perfect day."

It requires deep caution and protestation of affection ere we speak of what should be the qualification of Sabbath-school teachers; to alarm and repel the weak, the timid and the retiring, who are

often the most promising of teachers, is indeed to be deprecated. To shut the doors against those who may not yet have attained to the "fulness of the stature" of the man of God, would be at once unadvisable and fatal;—yet certain it is that all persons undertaking to teach, are not qualified for this work—that many are yet insensible of its dignity, responsibility, and sanctity; while others, by a limitation of their labours and feelings to the circumscribed hours when they are actually engaged in teaching, reap little— toil hopelessly—and year after year rises and sets, and dullness and barrenness are upon their classes and their exertions.

We would say, as a preliminary observation, that all candidates for this office should be previously spoken with; a conversation, if possible, without the form of a direct examination is most assuredly necessary. The pastor or superintendent should be consulted, and care taken that none was admitted who had not love for souls and a hungering and thirsting for his own salvation: nor need this deter the timid or alarm the scrupulous; all who are encouraged by friends, or by the secret monitions of their hearts, should present themselves. It will be the part of pastors or managers to be satisfied, and let such at that time be men full of prayer, lest they may, by hasty or rigid examination, lose some jewel from the crown of the goodly society, and some valuable helper from the work of the Lord.

### 2. *The temper, modes, and times of teaching.*

Those who enter a Sabbath-school are supposed to come as men prepared less to legislate than to conform to acknowledged rule; they will not lightly be chafed into distrust or mutiny by what may appear, for a time, irksome or laborious—and this moderation of temper must be extended to the dear children of their charge. I know no two words that so well express the tone which should be borne by a teacher, than those two, "cheerful decision." Let them be not partial to cleverness nor impatient to dullness; many strange and true stories are upon record of children once deemed hopeless, subsequently becoming the teacher's "joy and crown." The teacher is to be a pattern above all things, in temper, in love unfeigned, in kindness, in long-suffering. What a bright example does Paul show in his condescen-



sion and love towards Onesimus—what affection towards his adopted gospel-son, Timothy? What a bright example is that of Jesus, to children ever kind? The world would have interfered with his kindness, but he would not be interfered with; as he loved the young, so he embraced them tenderly and blessed them.

Many ways have been suggested of bringing instruction before children. In such a discourse as this, extensive allusion to various plans of teaching would be impracticable. Let me still say, that *previous preparation* is decidedly necessary; as the minister should see that he be a man of study and preparation, so should the Sunday-school teacher. Work is dull and often most tiresome to the teacher, when he comes unprepared before his class; but let him during the previous week, pray over his Bible, calmly and thoughtfully consider that portion which belongs to the following Sunday, and then, not only will he be likely to do good, but his work will be indeed a labour of love, without fatigue and without dullness. (a) The children too, should be previously aware of the coming subject; it might be useful, if in whole or in part, their memories were exercised therein; Acts viii. 30. "understandest thou what thou readest," is to be the frequent question of the teacher, while the pupil should be encouraged to pass no word or passage without understanding it. Falling back repeatedly on what has been previously said, has a happy effect; children are more attentive than ever when they expect to be thus overhauled in their little acquisitions—nay, they take delight in it; while as the work of love, and patience, and prayer is progressing, the teacher may often send up a brief yet fervent ejaculation to God, for his work, and his pupils, and his own soul!

Shall we plead with teachers on the subject of "watchfulness?" oh, watchful and penetrative are the eyes of little children, and quick are they to discover between profession and practice—therefore everything connected with pomp or finery should be avoided—the dear children dispise such vanities or admire them, and

in either case, how stands the teacher's credit, and the teacher's usefulness? And may we not refer to needless conversations between teachers,—to those little, useless, often gay and giddy gossipings which sometimes precede school-business? The best way to avoid all this is to keep strictly at one's post—to know none save the pastor or superintendent, except there be a necessity—and to go and return from the school, with as little stir or companionship as possible. And much is it to be questioned, whether associations at other times of both sexes, distinct from the actual work of the Sunday, and of the communications of instruction to the children, may not, in its good, be counterbalanced by evil—the closer Sunday-school work is confined to its actual duties, the safer the teacher, the more healthy the administration, the less room for discontent, or scandal, or vain display.

The *times* of teaching, nevertheless, belong not to the actual schoolroom only; the teacher is teaching, while silently and alone engaged in the precious work of preparation. He is teaching, when he visits, (at least quarterly,) the homes of his little charge. He is teaching, when visiting the young invalid; and when occasionally meeting his pupils, he is met by them in love and kindly recognition. He is not teaching truly, if he neglects this. He is not teaching, if he forsake, without great necessity, his charge; or, if obliged to be absent, he omits to send an approved substitute (approved by the pastor or superintendent;) he is not teaching, if he does not follow through life, while he is spared, by prayer, and inquiry, and kindness, the children of his Sunday flock.

3. The *end of Teaching*—it is a glorious end—a magnificent design, it is to win souls; and blessed is the promise made to them that so labour and so succeed. (Dan. xii. 3 and James v. 19, 20.) This design is supposed to be done in connection with the pastor, to strengthen his hands, and supply his unavoidable lack of labour; it is done thus with regard to the immortal spirit and eternal hopes of the scholar, while hereby,

(a) Many useful books have lately emanated from the press, which will be found valuable helps to the teacher. One, a most valuable one, "Scripture Questions, with answers on the Discourses and Parables," Second Edition, published by Curry, Dublin. This book is the production of one whose attention to this subject has been faithfully given; the other work is just issued from the press, "Life and Ministry of the Lord Jesus," containing a most copious collection of references.

is included the prospect—the almost certainty of great moral results,—while proper habit, generous motive, exemplary deed, and universal order are propounded, exemplified and encouraged.

The subject might be most extensively enlarged; but we must hasten to review, in the last place—

III.—TEACHING IN CONNECTION WITH PRIVATE FEELING. This requires the less stress, as it has been necessarily more or less noticed already. But it is deserving of a distinct notice ere we close; for who could part from a body of such people as are now presents, fellow-labourers, fellow-helpers, beloved for the cause sake, and not speak a word of hope and consolation. He can best best paint your feelings, who has felt them, and is still willing to feel them; for such anxieties are precious, and such hopes are as the very foretaste of heaven; we cannot forget our 'fears and misgivings,' lest we should become careless, or our labours become fruitless. Let not fears create inertia, let not misgivings become dishonour to the generous Master who promises a certainty of success. Fear not—pray—intercede for these little ones—mention them each by name, day by day—

“Let all these children, Lord be thine;  
Save them from Satan's thrall;  
So we shall meet at Jesus' feet  
And crown him Lord of all.”

Nay, encourage the dear children to pray for you; it will be double good—good to them, showing them how you value prayer, and good to you, for God loveth the prayer of the little child; yes, feeling deep and gushing interest for each dear child, you must remember that it is from God alone can come the result so fondly desired. Let your thoughts be thus, and your prayer thus, looking on each beloved object of your charge

“I'll move thine ear, I'll point thine eye,  
But, ah, the inward part,  
Great God the Spirit hear the sigh  
That trembles through my heart!

Break with thy vital beam benign  
O'er all the mental wild!  
Bright o'er the human chaos shine,  
And sanctify the child!”

The feelings of perplexity and dismay may often cross our souls on some unexpected occurrence, developing the lingering depravity of the human heart; but as you never despair, so let no sanguine and unreasonable expectations possess

you. I have known what it was to see fair hopes wither and decay, or suddenly become extinguished: but I have also known beautiful dawns and awakenings to light, love, and full assurance of faith, where all seemed hopeless and gone! Therefore, we are to go to the husbandman to learn our duty—to sow—and sow in patience, and yet without tardiness, for “He that observeth the wind, shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.” (Ecclesiastes xi. 4.) Labour is our's, results are God's—duty is our's, consummation is God's—prayer is our's, mercy is God's! Therefore, my beloved brethren, “let us be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

Nor should our feelings be limited to the *dear children* of the class, nor of the school. The *pastor* claims a share in our hearts. From whom may he expect intercession, if it be not from those who are most at his side, who are most frequently the witnesses of his labours and his affection?—Love him for the work's sake—love him for the Master's sake—love him, for he loves you. And let the *superintendent* of each school be specially remembered: his duties are ever onerous, and sometimes he is placed in critical circumstances, sometimes in perplexing situations. Oh, pray that he may ever possess the spirit of love, and of discretion, of a sound mind, and of patient watchfulness. And shall we not remember this glorious, time-honoured, catholic, and most prosperous *Society*, which God has favoured for so many years? Shall we forget how spirituality in our land grew with its growth, and strengthened with its strength, for God put great honor upon its work and labourers; and to-night we stand together with the hearts of, as it were, one man, grateful to God and this his much honored Institution; beholding its varied machinery; its out-pouring of one half million of God's Word over this our land, its calling forth latent energies, and nursing and cherishing hundreds of thousands, who yet live to acknowledge its goodness, and bless God for its generosity? Shall we not speak of the various and manifold works of which this society has been the ascertained and honored harbinger, the awakening from lethargy of young and old, the gathering

of the lambs, the temporary shelter of cottage or barn, changed for the beautiful school-house by valley or on mountain side, or by the fair streams of our land? Again, the school-house heralding the message of the Gospel, and welcoming the feet of those who bear glad tidings; and then the crowning stone of the house of God reared for public worship, arising from the labors of our society; while Clothing Societies, Temperance Societies, Missionary Societies, Libraries, and most important of all, Ministers loving and beloved, taught in her schools and endeared because

of their work, surround her on every side; how honored her position, how privileged our labors; how happy this our opportunity of meeting; pray for her prosperity; pray for her teachers, her scholars; for the generous people of England who offer their gold to her treasury, and their prayers to the God of heaven, imploring a blessing upon her labors and hopes, her objects and her committee.

The good Lord uphold us and guide us, sanctify and bless us for his name's sake.—Amen!

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## GOSPEL PREACHER.

"We preach Christ crucified—

"Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God."—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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REV. HUGH STOWELL.

REV. C. SEYMOUR.

THE TRAVAIL OF THE SOUL OF CHRIST.

### A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE CHAPEL OF THE MOLYNEUX ASYLUM, DUBLIN,

ON FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 19TH, 1839,

FOR THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

BY THE REV. HUGH STOWELL, A.M.

Of Manchester.

ISAIAH liii. 11.

"He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."

FRIENDSHIP has been beautifully defined as "the habitation of one soul in two bodies," inasmuch as unity of feeling and sympathy of affection are the very essence of genuine friendship; and to be the friend of Christ is to have the same mind and views that were in Christ Jesus; and to be deeply affected at what he underwent in redeeming us, and to be intensely desirous that he may see the fruit of his agony and bloody sweat, his cross and passion, must more or less characterize him who desires the name of friend of the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is nothing, perhaps, in which the church is more wanting than in this intimate, full feeling with her head. We make too light of the price of redemption, and we make too light of the purchase of redemption—we little prize it for ourselves, and we consequently little prize it

for others—we make a few efforts, small sacrifices, and offer cold and heartless prayers, that the whole world may become the fold of Christ, and Christ the one shepherd of that fold.

It is, therefore, we have selected, Christian brethren, as a subject for admonition and instruction on this occasion, the brief but most expressive description of what it cost our Master to redeem us. It is supplied in that passage which the prophet introduces when he had seemed to exhaust human language in describing the Redeemer. He had spoken of him as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, as wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities—he had spoken of him as set at naught and scoffed at, and scorned; and yet, all that came not up to the intense import of that expression, "he shall see of the travail of his soul."



We shall simply seek, in the first place, to illustrate *the travail of the Saviour's soul*; and in the next place, *the fruits of that travail which he sees, and is satisfied*. May he himself so accompany his word and his servant, that we may neither neglect so great salvation for ourselves, nor treacherously and selfishly keep it back from others.

I. THE TRAVAIL OF THE SOUL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. Let me implore you, my hearers, to remember, that it is a thing we are going to trace of a most serious and affecting nature, that it behoves us to draw nigh to it with solemnity of mind,—and, as Moses took off his shoes from his feet when he drew near to behold the presence of God, with such a spirit and sentiment of mind ought we to draw near to this mysterious theme. What finite mind can comprehend, or created tongue describe, what the Redeemer suffered to save us! We will follow the language of scripture, and venture no further than that language leads, respecting the silence of the lively oracles, not less than their voice.

I may be allowed to offer a few preliminary observations which may tend to enlarge our apprehensions of the Redeemer's sufferings for us. Let it then be observed, that the word which the Spirit of God selects, in order to give us an apprehension of what Christ endured to redeem us, is a word of no less intense meaning than the word TRAVAIL; and, perhaps, the language of mankind affords no word so fearfully expressive. The pain of a woman in her travail is the illustration that the Redeemer himself chooses once and again when he would convey the idea of pain, the most excruciating agony. How awful the expressiveness of that term when selected by the Spirit of God to convey to us a more adequate apprehension of what the Redeemer suffered to save sinners, the travail of his soul, the throes of anguish past finding out!

It may be further remarked, it was the travail of his *soul*. The mere suffering of the body can bear no comparison with anguish of mind. Though it is true, that none but he that has undergone keen physical agony can conceive how intense that agony may be when every nerve is racked, and every muscle is strung with torture; yet there never was a truer sentiment than that of the wise man, "the

spirit of a man can sustain his infirmity,"—the mind bears up under the most overwhelming weight of bodily and external calamity, "but a wounded spirit," a mind tortured to the core, "a wounded spirit who can bear?" I knew a man of God who had suffered much bodily infirmity for many years of sickness, and who afterwards, in the mysterious dispensations of God, was tortured with despair and agony of mind; I remember well his declaration when it pleased God that he should be emerged from the darkness that encompassed him,—he said, that all bodily pain, if concentrated into one hour, would not have equalled one agony of the soul he had just experienced. Oh, brethren, those that have felt the anguish of a mind sunk in despair and remorse can best tell what the soul can undergo.

But it was the *soul* of the Saviour that was made an offering for sin: and if we look merely at the outside show of his sufferings, on which some christians dwell, so as to derogate from the dignity of the awful theme, and on which those of a false and apostate church are specially wont, with painful punctuality, to dwell—if we look at the crown of thorns, the bitter mockery, the scourge, the nails, the cross, we look at but the semblance and outside of the Saviour's sufferings; we must penetrate beyond the veil of the body, and we must, with awful reverence, inspect the anguish of his soul, if we would at all adequately apprehend what it cost Jesus Christ to redeem us. Yes, it was in the mind, the Redeemer bore the weight of the guilt of the world.

And, let it, brethren, yet farther be remarked, that in the capacity for pain, minds vastly differ; what would be torture to one mind scarcely troubles or disturbs another. One mind is much more exquisitely finished and finely strung than another;—that mind is capable of an amount of anguish of which the more sordid, uncultivated, unrefined mind cannot form a conception, and hence, the torture of a refined mind will create but a brief movement to the unrefined mind, because it cannot conceive suffering from so slight a cause. The more the mind is elevated, and the faculties of the heart refined, the more acute will be its sufferings, the more wide its susceptibility of agony. Take this thought along with you, and then remember, that the soul of the Saviour, though a real and very human soul, was

yet a soul exempt from all that blunts sensibility and dims the faculties, that it possessed feelings of the most exquisite intensity; remember it was such a soul, and then you will have a still more impressive apprehension of what that soul underwent when it travailed in our redemption.

But there is another step we must advance in these observations, that we may be prepared to form a right conception of what it cost Christ to redeem us. Remember, then, brethren, though there was a human soul and human flesh subsisting in Christ, yet there was, besides that human soul, in intimate and indissoluble union with humanity, the fulness of the Godhead bodily; so that, though it be most true, and to be held most rigorously, that the deity of Christ, being incapable of suffering, did not undergo any thing of mortal woe, or mortal infirmity, yet, we believe, it is no less rigorously and definitely to be held, that the deity of Christ was so intimately and so perfectly interwoven and united with his humanity, that it imparted to the human soul a might and power of sustaining the weight of guilt, and undergoing the ocean of anguish through which the Saviour had to pass, of which that soul, as a mere human soul unsustained by present deity would be altogether incapable.

Oh, then, when we remember, that it was travail the Saviour suffered—travail of the *soul* he suffered, travail of the *Saviour's* soul, so pure, so exquisite, so perfect—that it was travail of that soul upheld by the omnipotence of the indwelling Godhead, oh, how overwhelming the computation of what it cost the Saviour to redeem us! And here, we will, as before, but bring to your remembrance the language of Scripture, not daring to give human invention or imagination on so solemn a theme. Remember, how that divine Redeemer, in the near approach of the hour and power of darkness said, “now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour, but for this cause, came I to this hour,—Father, glorify thy name.” Follow him to the last supper, and see him troubled in spirit, and testifying to his disciples, “with desire, I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.” Follow him forth to the garden of his fearful conflict, and

hear him saying, “my soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death,” “and he began to be sore amazed; and very heavy,” and he went from his disciples a little space, and he fell on the ground and prayed, “Oh, my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat was, as it were, large drops of blood, falling down to the ground.” Pass with your Saviour to the last fearful scene of his conflict and victory, and listen to that dread cry, “my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!” Well might the sun hide its face, and the rocks rend asunder, and the earth tremble, and the graves open, at that awful cry of nature's God!

Brethren, we have a sight, simply following the guidance of Scripture, to set before you—the travail of the soul of the Son of God. Oh, we may neglect and slight that great salvation; but what it cost the incarnate God to redeem us, no mind but infinite can comprehend!

But we turn to that branch of our subject, perhaps, in some degree, more level to our mind, and bright with joy, as the other is dark in woe, “He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.” It is, as if the prophet, carried on the wings of inspiration, had stood upon Mount Calvary, and as he eyed the dread sufferer, and hearkened to his dying cry, he looked into the vista of futurity, and saw all the bright and blessed results of that suffering,—then he joyfully lifts up his voice and exclaims, “he shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.”

What must be the amount of rewards and recompense that could compensate for such anguish, that could meet the mind of the Saviour, and fill its desires with fulness? For, be it remembered that the same sensibility of soul that makes the man of a refined mind capable of acuter pain, makes him no less capable of more exquisite enjoyment; and so equally are the feelings of men poised, that he who hath the acutest suffering hath usually the keenest delight, and therefore, when you remember what a mind is the mind of the Saviour, what a soul his human soul, how capable of the most intense fruition must that pure soul be; and when you remember, that the same indwelling godhead that upheld him beneath the

weight of the guilt of the world when laid on him, must impart to his human mind an amplitude of vision, and a vastness of apprehension that could not otherwise belong to it, and therefore, how immense must be the amount of the recompense of reward that can satisfy the soul of God incarnate.

II. Brethren, let us descend a little into the particulars of THE FRUITS OF THAT TRAVAIL. He sees it, and is satisfied, in the glory that he has brought to God in the highest. This, unquestionably, is the first and master object of redemption; for God, being an infinitely perfect being, must have the most perfect end in view: and the most perfect end in the universe can be but one, and that one must be the glory of his own name. It were, therefore, inconsistent with the perfections of Jehovah to seek any other higher end than his own glory, and therefore, the glory of God is the result he had in view. The heavens were called into being to manifest his glory, the wondrous chain of providence is drawn forth to illustrate his glory, all he has ever done, or shall do, whether in the punishment of the lost, or in the bliss of the saved, shall be to manifest his glory. Now, in the cross of Christ, in the redemption that is through his precious blood, his incarnation, his person, his work, the stupendous scheme of salvation, there is a manifestation of the glory of God, compared with which, creation has no glory, and providence has no glory, for Christ Jesus is the power of God and the wisdom of God to the whole intelligent universe, not merely to those who, in this small speck of the vast creation, contemplate the cross, but to the principalities and powers in heavenly places, through whom, through the church, and the Head of the church is made known the manifold wisdom of God. Angels desire to look into these things, and form their loftiest conceptions of the divine glory, through the salvation of mankind, there they catch their fervent song of zeal and love, and that is the sublimest object of the song. The Lamb that was slain is the centre of admiration, and the wonder of the universe. Yes, though to the blind and unbelieving mind of earthly philosophy and worldly wise men, there be nothing of glory seen in salvation through one who died as a malefactor, who, while he saved others, could not save himself, yet to

the enlightened, illumined mind, to the unscaled eye of faith, there is seen in the wondrous sufferings and works of Christ, such a discovery of the moral attributes of God, truth, justice, wisdom, mercy, faithfulness, such an effulgence of the divine moral attributes which constitute the glory of God (for it is not so much his power or glory on which cherubim and seraphim gaze when they adore, but his infinite holiness,—“holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts,” is their never-dying strain,) I say, in the cross and work of Christ, the holiness of God, the attributes harmoniously displayed, were manifested in such wise, that the universe never beheld before, and never can again. Yes, brethren, well might the angels sing,—“glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good-will towards men;” well might the Saviour too, make this the one high aim of his life from first to last,—“Lo, I come to do thy will O God,” and when troubled in spirit, and moved as man to shrink back from the hour of death, he suppressed it all by saying, “Father, glorify thy name, and there came a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.” Yes, brethren, glory has been brought already to God by the travail of the soul of Jesus, but in the further developement of the mystery of redemption, in the carrying out and consummation of the glorious work of saving the ransomed church of God, yet further glory will redound to Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the three in one will receive from redemption an eternal and unfathomable revenue of praise, love, and glory.

But to descend from the theme of which we can but speculate, and form but a childish conception at best, to things nearest to our level and which come home more to our selfish hearts; Jesus sees of the travail of his soul in that new covenant he has brought in between heaven and earth, a fallen race and a holy Creator. We do not appreciate what we owe to Christ for his interposition between God and man,—that sinner who neglects him, that despises his long-suffering, that turns the gifts of his providence into lasciviousness,—he owes what he has to the intercession of Christ; for when man fell from God, and when intercourse was broken up between the creature and God, and the great gulf was fixed which sin



had made, if there had been no Day-man to step in between, that could lay his hand on both and make peace,—so far as it appears from Scripture and reason, there would be nothing for the race of mankind, but the blackness of darkness and hopeless despair,—nothing to mitigate our lot, nothing to alleviate the horrors of our doom. Further, in the stars that gem the midnight of our life, in the fountain that meets us, to refresh us in this vale of tears, we owe it all to the Mediator of heaven and earth. He knew the interruption in the intercourse between God and man, he knew that no drop of mercy descended on this parched desert, that no cry for mercy could have ascended to the heavens; but by his blessed interposition, by becoming one with man, that he might make man one with God, he cast an eternal bridge across the unspanned gulf, whereby the sinner can come to God, and God can come down to bless the guilty sinner. He is the mystic ladder Jacob saw,—its feet on earth: he is man, by which every poor believer communes with God, and down which every mercy, gift, and grace descends to fallen man. Yes, brethren, that we have this Gospel of peace, that we have the covenant of reconciliation it unfolds, that we have the credentials which, as ambassadors we bear, that we come this night and “beseech you in Christ’s stead be ye reconciled to God,” is all due to this, that “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the ministry of reconciliation.” It is only the mind of the blessed Redeemer that can adequately appreciate this glorious result of the travail of his soul. The opening up a pathway of intercourse, “a new and living way, through the vail, that is to say his flesh,” between apostate man and a holy God, and giving us the covenant of reconciliation, promises of mercy, ministers of glad tidings—all is due to the Saviour’s travail, and this it is which fills his soul with incomprehensible delight.

But we advance a step further, and remind you that the Redeemer sees of the travail of his soul in the untold millions that, through that travail, obtain holiness and pardon upon earth, and eternal glory in heaven. We are lost oftentimes in the contemplation of what is too vast to grasp. Look, then, I be-

seech you, on one single sinner’s soul; contemplate it as an immortal soul—view it as big with the issues of eternity—regard it as having entered on a pathway it must travel when the world is gone by, and when time shall be no longer, that must be travelling on—on—while God endures: take that single soul, and view it in its lost condition, under the righteous sentence of death, under the curse of God, estranged from his love, at enmity against him, full of evil passions,—amiable, it may be, in the sight of man, in the sight of God dead—a living sepulchre entombing a lifeless spirit: look at that soul, doing mischief to others, and maturing itself for woe, and then follow it into the world of despair, and apprehend, if you can, “the worm that never dies, and the fire that is never quenched,” “the lake that burns with brimstone,” where there is “weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth,” “outer darkness,” “the blackness of darkness for ever!” “Who among us can dwell with the devouring fire? who can dwell with everlasting burnings,” and that for ever and ever! Oh! brethren, from what amount of woe is one single soul saved by the travail of Christ Jesus, who has delivered it from the curse and defilement of sin here, and brought it salvation from sin hereafter!

We turn and contemplate the soul that has been, through the travail of Christ’s soul, delivered from sin and wrath. Behold that soul, brought through faith into Christ Jesus; clothed with his righteousness, washed in his blood; of an alien, become a child; of an outcast and a stranger, become an inmate and a friend in the family of God; hatred changed into love to God; delight in sin changed into resistance of sin; enmity against holiness, changed into the beauty of holiness; becoming blessed, and being made a blessing; diffusing good and receiving good; ripening and maturing for glory; its good deeds following to testify it, not preceding, to justify it. When it leaves the body, and wings its way to the house of its Father in heaven, behold that soul, perfected in the divine image, and filled with all the fulness of God,—look at that soul, amidst the rapture of the blessed, joining in the song that never ceases, enjoying pleasure for evermore, and fulness of joy at God’s right hand: follow it on through endless ages, ever brightening



in its beauty, ever heightening in its bliss ! Oh, what mind but an infinite mind can grasp the amount of blessedness that one saved soul derives from the travail of the soul of the Son of God ! Brethren, all the sufferings that all the human race have ever undergone, from the fall of Adam, or shall undergo to the last day of the world, if brought into one aggregate, would not equal the sufferings that one lost soul shall undergo in eternity : and all the happiness that all the race of men shall ever enjoy below, if brought into one ocean, will not bear any proportion to the ocean of bliss that one saved soul shall enjoy—there will come a period in the revolution of eternity, when one would have suffered and the other enjoyed, immeasurably more than earth can give.

Oh then, think of the salvation of one soul, and what this Saviour saw in that glorious fruit of the travail of his soul ; think of what he saw in that one blessed result,—and then, brethren, enlarge your views, extend your minds ; for we do not love the doctrine that would narrow, if possible, the mercy of God, or the salvation of Jesus Christ : we love to contemplate it as offered to all, urged on all, and lost by none that will not wilfully reject it,—and then consider, that half of the human race dies, before they wilfully, actually sin after the similitude of Adam ; and, therefore, though they die in Adam, we believe they will live in Christ ; for, though they die naturally, that they should die eternally is not to be thought of, when Jesus is the federal head of mankind, as far as the primitive transgression went, at least as far as Adam was the federal head in his unfallen state. The Scripture saith of every sinner who wilfully transgresses, that “except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God ;” yet we cannot but conceive, that all who die in Adam before they wilfully transgress, will be saved in Christ. Brethren, nobler days await the church, and more splendid triumphs await the Saviour of the church. Prophecy has in song, holy men of old have anticipated the period when the church should be commensurate with the world, and all mankind should know their Saviour, from the least to the greatest ; and we seem hastening to the mountain of Pisgah, in the progress of the church, whence we may look before, and see the promised land stretching far and wide

throughout the earth. The Saviour will come,—though he may come in a whirlwind and fire, yet will he take to himself, in the “still small voice” of his mercy, a willing world to bow down at the feet of of its Redeemer,—the temple will be the world—the altar, every consecrated heart of every child of God.

Beloved brethren, although the Redeemer shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied in the restitution of all things, in the perfect redemption of his people, body and soul ; yet, we oftentimes dwell too much on this poor present state—too little on the bright futurity. We are every where taught in Scripture, to be looking for and hastening unto the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour : his last message to his people was, “behold, I come quickly,” and the answer of his people ought to be, “even so, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.” Our own scriptural church, in her beautiful scripture prayers at the funeral service, how does she take up the voice of her Master, and echo it back when she teaches the weeping mourners, who mourn not as those without hope, over the body that sleeps in the grave, to pray, that he should shortly accomplish the number of his elect, and hasten his kingdom. All the revolutions of empires, the strange convulsions that make men’s hearts quake within them, the changes that politicians apprehend, and worldly wise men speculate on, are but as the dust of the approaching chariot wheels of the great Deliverer coming to redeem a lost world. Yes, the whole earth is full of bursting revolution, travelling in birth to give up her dead to the glorious Redeemer, that committed them to her charge when earth was committed to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, in sure and certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life. Yes, and the very world, we believe, shall have its resurrection ; nature shall have its regeneration, its true beautifying, its restoration,—“Behold,” says he, that sits on the throne, “I make all things new :”—there is “a time of the restitution of all things which was spoken of by the holy prophets, since the world began.” We look to no reign on the scene of this world, but we look to a world to be purified of its corruption, redeemed of its bondage, and brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. We find,

annihilation has no part in prophecy,—annihilation seems alien to infinite benevolence and power,—and there is not in the world one sand-grain less than there was, when it came fresh from its Creator's hands; though all things about man never continue in the one stay, yet, amidst all revolutions and changes, there is not a sand-grain less than in the beginning.

Further, we cannot conceive that the world is to be annihilated. Satan then might triumph—he would have to glory—the victory of Christ would not be commensurate with the loss, if the world would be destroyed. True, it is to be destroyed by fire as it was by water; but the flood that altered its complexion, and baptized it with water, that it might not be wholly given up to the wrath of God, was but prefigurative of that property of baptism by fire, that shall burn out the curse and canker of sin from the elements of the world. “The elements shall melt with fervent heat,” that out of the funeral pyre may grow a more glorious creation than that over which “the morning stars sung together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” “We, according to his promise, look for a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” “The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now;”—“for the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope;”—“for the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God;”—“the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” Did nature sympathize with man in sin?—and shall she not sympathize with him in salvation? Did nature suffer with man in his ruin?—shall she not triumph with man in his renovation? Did nature put on weeds of woe when we transgressed?—shall she not adorn herself with beauty, with bridal attire, when she shall rejoice with all the inhabitants of a bright, and new, and heavenly scene?

If, brethren, earth shall be renewed, much more the ransomed portion of earth's inhabitants! “This corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality.” “Death shall be swallowed up in victory,” “our vile body

shall be changed into the likeness of his glorious body,” a countless multitude, in body and soul perfected in the similitude of their blessed Redeemer, shall be led by him triumphantly forth, the fruit of his travail.

And oh, when he shall look on the renovated creation, over the number without number of its ransomed inhabitants—when he shall look abroad and see, if it was great to speak the world into existence from God, how much greater to redeem, when he shall see it with new, untold, inconceivable beauty—the beauty of redeeming grace—Oh! if at the beginning, when he made all things, “he beheld, and lo, it was very good,” how much more *will* he behold, and lo, it will be very good!

“He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied,” in the glory then brought to God in consequence of that new covenant established between heaven and earth, in the salvation of untold myriads of immortal souls, in the spread of his kingdom, wide as the world,—in the glorious resurrection and perfection of the earth, and earth's ransomed inhabitants,—the King of glory, once the “man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,” shall “see of the travail of his soul.”

Men and brethren, we would press it on the careless and unbelieving,—“how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation!” Whatever may be the lot of the poor heathen, whatever there may be of alleviation in the depth of his woe,—brethren, there will be no alleviation in ours. Devils themselves have not that bitter ingredient in their cup of torment that the lost nominal Christian will have,—the rejection of the blood of Christ, and that with the sign of the cross on his brow, and the water of purification on his face! Oh, if the nominal Christian perishes, how great will be his woe! May God grant that the blood which was shed to save, may not be converted by our obstinacy and unbelief into the bitterest ingredient of our torment.

Men and brethren, if God so loved us while we were enemies, if Jesus so travailed to save us while we were enemies, can he well be slack or slow to receive and welcome the returning penitent? Oh, no, whatever costs man much, he prizes much,—and it cost Jesus his own heart's blood to redeem the sinner to perfect peace for ever. Go to him

at once, in the confidence that he is more ready to receive you, than thou art to return to God by him, and to pardon you, than thou art to receive the boon, without money, and without price.—“Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died.” Who is this that shall destroy him that finds life through his precious death?

Men and brethren, if Jesus so loved us, ought we not to love him? ought we not to love one another? ought we not to sympathize with the Saviour’s soul, to travail, as it were, with him, that he may see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied? Ought we not to “live, no more to ourselves, but to him who died for us and rose again?” Our time and talents and efforts, and purse and prayers, and whatever else we can present, we should consecrate to the high purpose of winning souls to the Redeemer. This is that blessed work that spreads itself before you this evening—this is the high privilege you are called on to take a part in this evening, to make known Christ’s salvation, wide as sin is to be known. It is not for us to make the counsels of God the rule of our obedience, but the command of our Master is our rule. Men say, God will send his Gospel—what a mystery it is that Christianity is so little diffused? and infidels say, how few have the Gospel; if it were necessary for the world, would not the world have it? We do not say it is not a mysterious circumstance that the word of Christ is so partially diffused, but the mystery is solved in the unfaithfulness of the church. Did Christ bid us to circumscribe his Gospel? did he put any restriction on the fountain of living waters? did he say, “thus far they shall go, and no farther?” No; he sounded it in the ears of his apostles, he has sounded it in the ears of his slumbering church ever since,—he peals it in the ears of his half awaked church now,—“Go ye into all the world,” no corner is excepted, “and preach the Gospel to every creature;” none that bears the stamp of man is shut out from the overtures of reconciliation. Are we to lay our supineness at the door of God’s mysterious providence? Are we to acquit ourselves from responsibility and duty by daring to leave it at the door of a merciful God? Doubtless he will deal

as seemeth to him fit with the heathen, but he will not excuse the unfaithfulness and slothfulness of his church. Is it again said, God might have done it otherwise? Yes, but he saw it not fit; he left it not to angels, but to the church, that as she had obtained mercy she should show mercy; he radiated her with his mercy, that she should shed that radiance wide as the world.

We would desire to impress this on your consciences. There are many speculations and schemes afloat, as to how far we may be doing the work of God, or interfering with it, or how far we can do much or wait till he interposes with miraculous agency. We have nothing to do but to walk in the plain pathway of duty; our simple duty is to “preach the Gospel to every creature;” till that is done, let us not speak of mysterious interposition.

It is said, you may preach to all men, and not one may be saved. If Gabriel, if Jesus preached, unless the Holy Ghost blessed the word, it could not profit. But what, then, is this to release us from our obligations? Unless God gives the rain and sunshine, not a grain would grow; are we, therefore, exempted from doing our part, and leaving the result with God? In the marriage in Cana of Galilee, the servants might have said, “could he not fill the water-pots with water, as well as transmute the water into wine?” But he is ever pleased to connect human agency with divine sovereignty, he would have man fulfilling his duty, and he will fulfil his promise; therefore the servant filled the water-pots with water, and at his command drew out and bare wine to the governor of the feast; and it is for us to fill every vessel of the human mind and heart with the knowledge of salvation, the water of life—it is with God in his sovereign will to transmute the water into wine; but our duty is plain, and no voice of prophecy—no voice of the secret counsels of God—no idea of the approaching personal advent, ought to come between the simple obedience of that great precept, “preach the Gospel to every creature.”

I conjure you, therefore, men and brethren, not to cloak your supineness, or justify your selfishness, or excuse your illiberality and niggardliness of heart, by any appeal to the secret purposes of God, or slothful waiting for miraculous interposition. Be about your Master’s business,

"blessed is he whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing,"—working while it is day; that is the man that can meet his Master with joy, because found "with his loins girt, and his lights burning," and his armour buckled on.

Brethren, in helping the Church Missionary Society, a society connected with the beloved Church of our land,—a Church, we hesitate not to say, that for purity of doctrine is unequalled, and with all her faults, has more vital godliness, more moral endurance in her—more power to withstand error and uphold truth—is a mightier engine and machinery for good, than any other to be found in the world. The more we know her principles, the more we shall love her, and stand by her, with whom the cause of Christ is so identified, that we believe it must stand or fall with her together, and that we shall have an eruption of infidelity, or a dark deluge of popery, if that Church be overthrown.

To support Christian missions in connexion with the Church Missionary Society is a clear, simple, and blessed mode of fulfilling our Lord's commands, and preaching the Gospel to every creature. That institution, through the goodness of God, has done as much, or more than any institution, to plant, here and there, far and wide, through the length and breadth of the land, the standard of the cross. How refreshing is it to the more aged pilgrim to contrast the face of the world now with the face of the world in his earlier days. He then looked abroad—the wild waste of heathenism had scarcely one green spot to relieve it. However dreary the wilderness, he sees some bright land of green that the missionaries have won from the

waste, and made to blossom as the rose. It was like a midnight sky, but now, through the fissures of the clouds are seen stars of light and hope, gemming the sky—a true harbinger that the sun of righteousness is rising, and the day-spring is breaking on a long benighted world.

Brethren, what have you done for this work? what have you sacrificed for this work? Have you sympathized with your Saviour? Have you longed to see of the travail of his soul? Have you in any degree felt the intense desire that he must have felt, when "for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame?" I conjure you who have held aloof, through misconception of the society—from want of seeing its paramount obligations, or through want of self-denial in saving something for Christ—to neglect it no longer. The Christian cannot have it brought before him without peril to his soul; he cannot employ Christ's prayer, if he disobeying Christ's plain command, that the Gospel should be preached to all nations. Say not, I have nothing to spare. Think, what did Christ give for you, what did he spare for you?—"God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all." Christ spared not his own heart's blood, but shed it for us all. We will use no lower motive, I appeal to no lower principle, but simply say, let each person give what he or she would wish to have given, when they shall meet their Saviour, and he shall ask them,—what did you for me?

And oh, may he accept the gift, whether small or great, pardon the imperfection of the motive, and bless the sincere giver. Amen.



# FAREWELL SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF DERRY,

ON SUNDAY, 7TH APRIL, 1839,

BY THE REV. C. SEYMOUR, A. M.

Acts. xx. 32

"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

AMONGST the many distinguishing features of the character of Paul the apostle, the interest wherewith he regarded the churches which he had planted is not the least remarkable. This interest was not with him transient or superficial—it was deep—it was abiding—"that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches." The numerous demands thus made upon his sympathy, his counsel, his prayers, did not diminish the amount of affectionate concern which he felt in each case—the smallest community was as much in his heart, as if itself only had a place there. He could say of the church at Philippi—"God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ,—I have you in my heart." He could say of them in Colosse—"We give thanks to God, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you." Of the church in Thessalonica we find him speaking thus—"We were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children; so being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the Gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because you were dear unto us." His feelings towards the Christians at Corinth are thus touchingly described—"Out of much affliction and anguish of heart, I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you." Nor is this all: Ephesus, too, claims and

receives its own measure of affectionate concern—"Ye know from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears and temptations—how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you and have taught you publicly, and from house to house." It was during a short period of personal communion with the ministers of this church, that the words of our text were delivered by the Apostle. His ministry at Ephesus had been one of peculiar and of prolonged trial. Heathen superstition had there erected its highest altars, and there boasted of its most inveterate votaries; there Jewish prejudice also presented many obstacles to the progress of the Gospel. For the space of three years he laboured amongst them, "testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." At the end of that period he proceeded to Macedonia, whence he made a circuit of missionary travel towards Jerusalem. It was in the progress of this circuit, during the stay of the ship which conveyed him, at Miletus, that Paul sent for the elders of the church from Ephesus, and when they were come to him, addressed them in the words which occupy from the 18th to the 35th verse; in which he reviews his ministry amongst them, stirs up their minds by way of remembrance, warns them against apprehended corruptions of

doctrine, constrains them by the most urgent motives, and concludes by recommending them to the grace of God:—"Now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

In directing your thoughts to this Scripture, brethren, I propose to consider it as illustrating two points.

I. *The anxious solicitude connected with the Christian ministry.*

II. *The Efficacy of the Gospel.*

I. THE ANXIOUS SOLICITUDE CONNECTED WITH THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.—It was not for Paul's sake only that the exhibition of his pastoral feelings is here recorded, but for us also, that we may, whether ministers or people, understand the nature of that interesting and holy relation. It is important that we have correct views of the ministerial office—that we understand aright the dignity and sacredness of the vocation itself, and the magnitude of the object which it contemplates. The Christian ministry is not the office of a lecturer, sitting in the chair of philosophy; it is not a system or machinery, established for the mere inculcating and maintaining of the principles of religion and morality. It is far more transcendent in its nature and object. The ministry is an institution, divinely appointed—its end is to carry into effect the mode of reconciliation between God and man proposed in the Gospel of Jesus—to bear the message of pardon and salvation to a lost world—to administer the quickening and sanctifying word of truth—and to "feed the flock which God has purchased with his own blood." The true nature of it is thus unerringly stated—"God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." It is this consideration, brethren, that invests the office of a minister with peculiar and great responsibility, and accounts for the anxiety and solicitude with which the discharge of the office is necessarily attended in the case of all who feel that responsibility. "I have a message from God unto thee." There is in this something of unspeakable serious-

ness. Isaiah felt it when he said, "Woe is me, for I am undone;" Paul felt it—"Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel." It is for eternity that they minister—to exhort sinners to flee from the wrath to come—to deal with their consciences, and understandings, and hearts, on the question of their eternal well-being—to awaken, instruct, constrain and encourage, with a view to eternity. This is the nature of their commission; and is it not enough to state it thus, in order to perceive that the administration of it must be attended with anxieties and fears, with emotions and feelings unknown in any other relation amongst men. For to whom are ministers sent? To sinners whose hearts are averse to their message—who love not to be disturbed from the false peace in which they are reposing—who cling tenaciously to other and fatal means of safety. Does not this ensure much trial to them who watch for their souls, as those that must give account? Souls are passing into eternity, probably rejecting the way of salvation, and thus making their condemnation heavier. How depressing is such a thought. To witness the experience of the prophet fulfilled in the ministry. "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed." This is the constant effect produced by a preached Gospel. It is a savour of death unto death to those who are not influenced by it to salvation. "Since I was ordained," says Mr. Brown, of Haddington, "I know not how often it hath been heavy to my heart to think how much this Scripture (Isaiah vi. 9, 10,) hath been fulfilled in my ministry: frequently I have had an anxious desire to be removed by death from becoming a plague to my poor congregation; often, however, I have tasked myself and have considered this wish as my folly, and begged of the Lord, that if it was not for his glory to remove me by death, he would make me successful in my work." Nor does the solicitude of the minister end here. Even they of whom there is hope, cause him much anxiety. To instruct the inquiring, to rouse the indolent, to discriminate aright between the various states of mind and the circumstances of his people, to reprove and exhort with all

long-suffering, to warn against prevailing sins, and errors of opinion and practice,—so to hold up the truth of the Gospel before them, that they may be edified and strengthened—effectually to meet all their wants, and to encourage them on the way to life,—this is no trifling thing. The weight of it drew even from an inspired Apostle the exclamation—"Who is sufficient for these things." This is not to be done without anxiety of mind. It may be thought easy to ascend the pulpit, and preach a sermon—to visit the sick, and perform the duty of reading and prayer—but there is anxiety about the adaptation of that sermon, and visit; there is anxiety about the result of that sermon, and the result of that visit. But I will close this division of my subject, into which I should not have entered so fully if I were addressing you, brethren, as at other times; but as the bond which has long connected us together as minister and people ceases on the present occasion, I deemed it right to enlarge as I have done, that I might be justified in speaking to you as I shall speak, and that there might be attached to my words addressed to you this day all the weight derived from the conviction of a last address from a minister to his people. I also desired by this to lead you to appreciate the ministry which will still be over you in the Lord, that you may understand the motives by which I know them to be actuated, the obligations by which they are constrained, and be induced to regard their ministry, as it is, indeed, an ordinance of God—remembering, that so far as they enforce the truth, it is not they that speak but Christ, who has said, "He that heareth you heareth me."

II. The second subject illustrated in the text, of which we proposed to treat, is—THE EFFICACY OF THE GOSPEL—"which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

The efficacy herein spoken of is ascribed to God and the word of his grace. It is questioned whether it can be strictly said, that the "word of grace" gives an inheritance—an affirmation applicable to God only; but it matters not, God is the giver, and the word of his Gospel is the gracious instrumentality through which the gift is bestowed and received. If God build up any in the faith and holiness of Christianity, if he give to any an inhe-

ritance among the sanctified, it is through the effectual operation of the word of the Gospel, which is "able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." The power of the Gospel is here described in a two-fold effect—"able to build up"—"able to give an inheritance."

1. The figure of building, as illustrating the influence and effects of religion, is frequently met with in the Scriptures. Jude exhorts his beloved brethren "to build themselves up in their most holy faith." Several important points are illustrated by this figure. It implies a *foundation laid*. There is no building without a foundation. Religion also must have a basis whereon to rest. We behold in the Christian many exhibitions of spiritual experience—we see his life adorned with the goodly fruits of righteousness—a general conformity to the will of God, in his spirit and conversation. This is a superstructure raised upon some foundation—what is the foundation of all the Christian's experimental and practical religion, of all his hopes and joys, and willing obedience? Are they the fruit of good natural dispositions, or the result of religious training? It is not so—"who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" The foundation is Jesus Christ. It is said by God himself, "Behold I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste." And again—"Other foundation can no man lay but that which is laid, Christ Jesus." He is the ground of the Christian's hope, the sure ground—"He that believeth shall not be confounded." He was consecrated of the Father, prepared of him before the beginning of the world, sent forth from heaven in the likeness of sinful flesh—he obeyed—he suffered—he died—he rose again—he ascended into heaven—he intercedes. *This is the foundation.* "If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins." He is the foundation of the Christian's holiness, for it is from him that spiritual life, without which there can be no obedience, is derived; it is through him that the spirit of holiness comes; it is from the exercise of faith in him that all the motives, and helps, and energies, which promote and sustain godliness, proceed.

"Without me ye can do nothing; as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me." To this effect is such exhortations as the following—"As ye have, therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith." Every hope that is not laid upon Him will come to nought; every comfort that is not derived from his will will be taken away; every work that is not built upon him will be rejected and burnt up.

This is the reason, brethren, why you have so often heard of the name of Jesus from this pulpit—we could not else preach the truth; to Him we direct the sinner, that he may believe, be forgiven, and saved—to Him we direct the believer, that he may grow in grace, and glorify God in his body and in his spirit, which are His. Of Him would I testify, with this my last voice to this congregation, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

*Increase* is another idea contained in the figure. When the foundation is laid, the superstructure is progressively laid upon it, one stone is put upon another, until the whole is completed. The Christian is not perfected in a day—there is a beginning and a continuing—"first the blade, then the ear, then the full-grown corn in the ear." When he savingly believes in Christ, he is a Christian, but weak and inexperienced; life is there but not matured, or abundantly fruitful. Now the work of improvement goes on—he makes increase in knowledge—his affections become strengthened into principles—his motives become more pure—old dispositions and tempers are weakened—the mind that was in Christ, which is now his, becomes more plainly and decidedly traced upon his character; as his knowledge increases, so is the perception of his deficiencies quickened—thus, under the influence of the Spirit, produces humbleness of mind, and urges to continuous efforts after a nearer conformity to perfect holiness. Now our text declares that this effect is produced by the Gospel, for the Gospel is a series of truths, upon which the mind of the believer is exercised, and by which, through the energy of the Holy Spirit, is produced an increase of experience and holiness. It is in that Gospel that Christ

is exhibited, from whom is derived many a motive to stimulate to perseverance. By looking to Him, hope and love, the two main springs of holiness, are set in motion—"We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." The word of the Gospel furnishes milk to babes that they may grow thereby, and supplies strong meat to those of full age, that they may increase and abound more and more. Christ and his Gospel in the ordinances carry on this process of building—the ordinances build up many in self-righteousness, in self-deceiving, in hardness of heart; but they cause the living soul to make increase in all righteousness and truth.

*Stability* is also denoted by this figure. There is something in the notion of building up, which suggests compactness—solidity—strength. The establishment of the Christian is of essential importance—knowledge must be strengthened into experience, affections into principles, and principles into habits. There is a looseness of religious opinion, a laxity of principle amongst many, they adopt sentiments hastily, and lay them down as hastily—"ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth," "unstable as water," yielding to every influence without steadiness or fixedness. This must not be so with us, brethren, we must know the truth and be established in it, we must have our experience deepened, our principles and opinions fixed as far as it is possible, and our habits steady and consistent. The Gospel makes provision for this establishment, when Jesus ascended up on high, "he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying (or building up) of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we be henceforth, no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the slight of men and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

Such is the nature of that edification which the word of God's grace effects in the Christian. It is a work of difficulty, so it implies *able* to build up. It is like



the building in which Nehemiah laboured, wherein every man wrought with one of his hands in the work, while he held a weapon in the other. The Christian is sore let and hindered in his work, he has many adversaries, much to discourage and depress, but he has access by faith to a power by which he will be made more than conqueror. Of this power I would remind you, my fellow Christians, while with the apostle—"I commend you to God and the word of his grace."

2. The power of the Gospel is described yet further by another effect. It is "able to give an inheritance among them that are sanctified." This is the end for which the building is being prepared—this is the termination, the consummation of holiness. The ultimate purpose, for which the Lord of glory died, and for which he instituted a ministry, and for which the Christian is brought under the power of the Gospel, being "begotten again into an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for such as are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." In this inheritance as given—two things are implied—certainty and gratuitousness. Inheritance was the only lasting title to property amongst the Jews. By the mode, in which Jehovah, had settled the land of Judea, it was arranged that every tribe should enjoy its own portion, the same that was assigned to each at the original division of the land by lot. This settlement was not to be disturbed; for though it should happen, that in the course of years, through prodigality, or neglect, or other cause, the possession had passed into other hands; yet in the fiftieth year, the year of jubilee, it was appointed that the land should revert to the original owners. It might have been parted with by purchase or by gift; but neither the gift nor the purchase constituted a title, which held good beyond the jubilee—hence inheritance alone made a possession sure—and such, brethren, is the nature of the Christian's title. Its foundation is the promise, the covenanted promise of God in Christ. "God willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath—that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an an-

chor of the soul, both sure and steadfast." The evidence of a personal interest in this title is—conversion. It is by the change wrought through the Gospel, within the soul, that an interest in this inheritance is evidenced. It is thus, that "the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ: if so be, that we suffer with him that we may be also glorified together." It was for this that Peter blessed the Lord. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy hath *begotten us again* unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (by the instrumentality of the Gospel) to an inheritance incorruptible."

This inheritance is also gratuitous. It is not derived from natural right—"we are born in sin and the children of wrath" heirs of corruption and of misery. It is derived from adoption—the right of the adopted child to his inheritance as it was understood amongst the ancient Romans, rested upon the act of his adoption, which adoption was gratuitous, the free and voluntary act of the adopter. Christ has purchased the Christian's inheritance—it is blood bought. But it is ours, when we are adopted into the family of God, and walk as his children in the ways of love and holiness. This inheritance, of the nature of which we cannot speak particularly, being such as eye hath not seen nor ear heard, is given by the Gospel—for the Gospel testifies of a Saviour who bought it, and it sheds abroad the Spirit in the heart, by which an interest in the inheritance is effected. Did we know it rightly, brethren—did we realize the hope of it in ourselves, we would exclaim—"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

Such, my brethren, is what the Gospel bestows, character and privilege, holiness and salvation, in this world, justifying, sanctifying knowledge of the truth, and in the world to come, life everlasting. Such was the comprehensive benediction of the apostle when he was about to separate from those amongst whom he had long gone, preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ. With the repetition of the same commendation, and without any further allusion to the circumstance of my removal, I would now conclude, but that

I feel constrained, now for the last time, to make an application of the subject before us, or rather an application of all that I have ever spoken to you of the Gospel of Christ. There is something unspeakably serious in the circumstances under which I stand before you this day—it is the delivery of a last message. It is true, brethren, and let us bless God for it, that your candlestick still remains, and that the light which beams from it, will not be in the slightest measure, dimmed or weakened by this providence—it will continue to send forth a clear, a warming, and a saving light, by which I pray you may all be brought on the way to the heavenly kingdom. But yet it is solemnizing to think that the period of our being together, (upwards of nine years,) has involved each of the parties in a large amount of responsibility. May each lay these questions respectively to our hearts. How have I ministered?—and how have you received the word ministered? May the Lord, with whom we have to do, pardon the guiltiness both of you and me in this matter.

I desire to address those of this congregation who have tasted the word of grace, and are living under the power and influence of the Gospel. My brethren, you know the value of that Gospel which is preached to you—you know it from what it has wrought in you. Let Christ, the subject, the author, the glory of it, be precious to you. Cleave to him with full purpose of heart, and out of your living faith in him, be bringing forth daily the fruits of good living. Let it be the determinate purpose of your souls to grow in grace—to be more holy. Be steadfast in the faith; mind not vain, speculative notions, which are now deceiving many; be not moved away from your steadfastness by the inconsistencies of professors, or by the blighting influence of this world. Remember in all your conflicts the promise—"My grace is sufficient for thee." Remember the inheritance for which you are looking; this will purify—it will strengthen. Brethren, love one another—bear one another's burdens—forgiving each other. This is essential to your prosperity as well as to your comfort. It is thus too that many, beholding your union, will join themselves to the Lord—"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you,

or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel." I know, brethren, that the prayers you offer up continually for your ministers, will not cease to be presented for him who so long enjoyed that privilege, and who is amongst the weakest, as well as the most unworthy of all the Lord's servants. Brethren, you have much given you in the way of privilege—of you will much be required. Oh, in this day of profession—in this day of wild doctrines—in this day of increasing knowledge, "hold fast the form of sound words," which belongs to the church of which you are members,—be sober, be consistent, and "walk worthy of the vocation whereunto you are called."

To the young people of my charge I must offer a few parting words. You, much beloved, form no small portion of the minister's affections and anxieties.—Upon your hearts, also, has been cast the precious seed of the Gospel, with the expectation of much fruit. Oh, see that this hope will not be in vain. Cherish the lessons of instruction which you have learned, and continue to learn from the Word of God—lay them up in your hearts—resolve them into prayers—try to feel and to live what you know. Be found giving evidence of early piety—loving God, hating sin, obedient to your parents. There is no part of my ministry here that I shall cherish with such fond recollections as this, because there is hope upon which the Lord has permitted me to see such decided fruits of his blessing. There are those who, some years hence, were sitting in a class in this church, as heedless as any of their fellows, who are now, amid scenes of temptation in this and in distant lands, adorning their profession with a blameless and consistent life,—may it so be said of you. Forget not your baptismal engagements. You are the children of God, solemnly, with prayer, and with the typical water dedicated to the service of the Triune Jehovah. Keep this in mind—"you are not your own." Remember the interest with which God looks down upon you. He loves to behold the youthful effort in religion, to hear your prayers. Oh, choose him for your portion: by your own act, your own choice, say, 'as for us, we will serve the Lord who loved us and gave himself for us.'

But as there may be those amongst my hearers to-day, who, it is to be feared, are yet uninfluenced by the Gospel,—to you, brethren, I would speak also. You have often been addressed in language of expostulation and reproof. It was done under the conviction of the danger of unrepented sin, and of the imperative necessity of obeying the gospel. It was done, not to gratify a censorious or a fault-finding spirit, or the vanity of official authority. It proceeded from a sense of ministerial responsibility—from sincere and affectionate interest in your welfare—from a well-grounded persuasion that your condition was one over which the word of God writes ‘condemnation,’ in the most legible characters.

My brethren, suffer the word of exhortation thus once; while you hold out against the word of salvation, you are hardening your hearts. The day of account is at hand—the solemn enquiry will soon be instituted, which will determine your everlasting destinies. You cannot plead, that you have not been warned of your danger—that you have not been called to repentance and invited to salvation. Oh! brethren, if you would not be amongst the children of perdition in that day—if you would not be banished for ever from all happiness—hearken now to the gospel of your Saviour, consider

your ways. Bethink yourselves, now while it is called to-day; give up your indifference, your worldliness, your indecision, your formality of profession; and in heart and soul give heed to the voice which speaks to you from heaven, “turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die; turn and live ye.” The inheritance of heaven is reserved for those only who are being built up unto holiness; you have yet to lay the foundation, to believe in Christ. The inheritance is for them that are sanctified—you are the servants of corruption. The river of the water of life, with its healing stream, is running past you—will you refuse to drink: the message of salvation is borne to your ears—will you not accept it. Brethren, there is no true reality in any thing but in the matter of eternity. Ponder the subject of eternity, and may the spirit of God bring your thoughts to good effect.

Finally, brethren, farewell.

“May the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

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# THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

## GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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REV. H. WOODWARD.

ARCHDEACON OF RAPHOE.

THE ASCENSION.

### A SERMON,

PREACHED IN ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH, DUBLIN,

ON ASCENSION THURSDAY, 9TH MAY, 1839.

BY THE REV. H. WOODWARD, A.M.

Rector of Fethard.

JOHN XX, 17.

“ Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father ; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father ; and to my God and your God.”

THERE is a fine contrast between the circumstances recorded in the commencement of this chapter, and the change of scene which is presented to us at the eleventh verse—“ But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping ; and as she wept she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre.” It appears from the second verse that she knew quite well that the Lord was removed out of it ; and therefore it could not have been with any expectation of seeing the body that she looked into the sepulchre ; there appears no other reason to be assigned than that she did so in order to indulge her sorrow. It is good for a mourner sometimes to re-

open the wounds and let them bleed. There are many persons who look back to seasons of affliction, and, contrasting them with the harsh collisions of the world, or with the disappointments of what is called pleasure, they say that perhaps they had more real happiness in those times of mourning than they experienced since. We find a beam of joy breaking in upon this solitude of grief. She “ seeth two angels in white, sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain,” and these pure and exalted beings appeared to have taken an interest in her concerns—“ They say unto her, Woman,



why weepest thou? She saith unto them, because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said she turned herself back." It appears, at first, difficult to account for this; why, it might be asked, when engaged in conversation with these exalted beings should she have suddenly turned her back upon them? It would appear in all probability that she saw something in the countenances of these angels, perhaps she observed their eyes suddenly light up with admiration and love by some object which she did not perceive, but which she knew from the manner of their looking must be behind her, and that she turned round to see what that object might be, and she "saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus." Whether it was from the darkness of the hour, it being early in the morning, or that "her eyes were holden," or from the circumstance of our Lord choosing to throw a veil over himself to prevent him from being clearly discernible to her, or from whatever reason, it appears that she saw a figure and yet knew not that it was the Lord. "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?" Observe, the angels said, "Why weepest thou?" but they did not add, "Whom seekest thou?" They showed sympathy with her sorrow, but they did not inquire into the nature of it, knowing that they must fail in holding out any remedy, or any relief from her distress. They could not say, "Come unto us all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and we will give you rest." But the Lord inquires into the cause of her distress—he is ready to probe her wound to the very utmost, knowing that he had a balm and a medi-

cine for every wound, and for every dis-temper of the soul, "she supposing him to be the gardener," (or owner of the garden,) "saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." Nothing but the Scriptures can furnish such an inimitable instance of divine simplicity as this. Here, without any kind of preface to prepare this person with whom she was conversing for the subject which lay nearest her heart, she breaks at once upon the subject, "if thou have borne him hence" (without saying who the *him* was) "tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary!" A well known voice now reached her ear; for she, like another Mary, had been accustomed to sit at Jesus' feet and hear his word. This was a voice which in all her sorrows had said to her, "weep not;" it was a voice whose soft and blessed accents had said to her burdened heart, "thy sins are forgiven thee." It was the Shepherd's voice; and she, though long a wandering sheep, knew its joyful sound, she needed no assurances, no signs from heaven to turn her darkness to light and her sorrows to joy, pronounced by him who spake as never man spake her own name possessed a magic power—the simple sound of "*Mary*" flashed conviction on her soul—it was the sober certainty of waking bliss—her doubts were all gone; her Lord and Saviour was risen indeed; death could not hold him, he had triumphed over the grave, but he had not forgotten her. The tone of his voice, the manner of his speaking was as familiar, as condescending, as full of tenderness and love as ever—"She turned herself and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus

saith unto her, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended unto my Father."

The word which is translated "touch" signifies to *hold*, or to *detain*, and therefore this is better understood by conceiving that our Lord said to her, "Do not detain me, do not lay hold of me." But we shall best understand the beginning of this verse by looking to the fourteenth chapter of this gospel, where our Lord cheers his sorrowing disciples with this promise, "I go," he says, "to prepare a place for you, that where I am, there ye may be also." Now, in all probability Mary Magdalene, when she saw the Lord thus risen from the grave, conceived that he was about to fulfil that promise, that she and the other disciples were to be where he was, and that they were never to be parted again; and that full of this expectation she had seized him by the feet and endeavoured to detain him. It was in order that he might disentangle himself from her embraces that he thus expressed himself, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go" (he adds) "to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God"—as much as to say, 'wait, be patient, the time is not yet come, I must previously go to my Father and prepare a place for you, and all my other disciples, and then where I am there shall my servants be.'

Observe that this is the first occasion on which our Lord styles his disciples *brethren*. He had called them children before, he had called them friends before, he had called them by many endearing appellations, but he never used the condescending term *brethren* before. And observe the circumstances under which

our Lord for the first time thus condescended to use it. It was after (according to his human nature) he had been highly exalted; just after he had gained his victory on the cross over all the powers of darkness; after the mystical Pharoah and his chariots and horsemen were drowned in the Red Sea; it was after he came "from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength." He had, I say, as man, greatly risen since the last time he addressed his disciples; and yet it is at this very point of his history—when he ascended thus high—when he had been victorious over death and over the grave—that, instead of growing cold, and holding himself at a greater distance from his disciples than he did before, that for the first time he calls them brethren. Observe, also, the position in which they stood. But very lately they had all forsaken him and fled. It was but lately that through timidity and fear they denied him, and disowned to bear any relation to him—it was after they left him alone in his utmost need—it was so soon after this that he condescended to call them brethren! But, in fact, there are mines of tenderness in this subject, and it is good for us to dwell on the minutest features of the Saviour's character; it is by studying the lesser lineaments of that character that we are drawn to him by cords of love. It is, in fact, by thus looking unto Jesus that the soul experiences a real salvation, for the love of Christ is the salvation of the soul.

Observe the generosity that appears in his character as man. It was not merely that he forgave them, for we may forgive and still retain many remembrances of the injuries we have received, but he gave

the utmost proof that all these things had been utterly effaced from the feelings of his mind, by taking it for granted that they had still the same love for him that they formerly professed. He knew their hearts—he knew that those hearts were with him—and though, from the wretched weaknesses of their nature, they were led to deny and forsake him, he knew the sincerity with which they had all virtually by their spokesman Peter, said, “Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest that we love thee.” He had often compared the influences of the Holy Spirit to streams of water poured into a thirsty soil—he knew how fine the analogy—how true the correspondence was. He knew that as the water rushes by its native tendency to its own level, so the love of God once shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, however it may decline or languish, or seem to have lost its life and savour for a time, yet that it is impregnated with an immortal essence, by which it will throw off this damp, it being impossible that it should be holden of it, and that it will again throb in the heart, quicken in the soul, regain the elevation from whence it fell, and yield itself to that great law of spiritual attraction by which every stream that flows from God returns again to its parent ocean.

Our Lord, then, knew the love that existed in the hearts of his disciples, and he cheered them with the announcement that he was now about to receive his crown of glory. His message was as much as to say to them, “My sorrows are all over, and my warfare is accomplished; go and tell my brethren these glad tidings—go and tell Peter, that he may now say of every indignity that could

be offered me, or every injury that could be done me, ‘be it far from thee Lord, this shall not be unto thee.’” He sent this message of rejoicing to them, that they might be cheered by the announcement that their blessed Lord and Master was now about to pass into his eternal glory. Now it was that he could repeat to them, “If ye love me ye would rejoice because I said I go to my Father, for my Father is greater than I. In that world where goodness and the capacity of devising good are one and the same, where without contradiction the less is blessed of the better, you cannot but rejoice that in my mediatorial character and human nature, I am about to ascend to the fulness of joy, and to the fountain and source of all blessedness.”

But he adds to this, ‘I am about to ascend to your Father as well as to mine.’ The weaknesses of human nature are such, that a man, when he has passed from sorrow into a state of joy, is very apt to lose sympathy with those friends whom he leaves still struggling amidst the waves of life, and grappling with its difficulties. It is almost impossible, from the weaknesses of human nature, that it could be otherwise; but it is doubtless often grateful to those who, seeing one who had been long suffering with them in sorrow, lifted out of the like circumstances, and often, as I said before, forgetting those feelings which they held in common. And even upon the bed of death, when the saint who is ready to receive his crown is panting for his deliverance, that he may be with Christ, mourning friends often feel it a trial to them to see how ready one who was as dear to them as their own soul is to part

from them. It often reminds me of those lines of Doddridge—

“Tender friends awhile may mourn  
Me from their embraces torn;  
Dearer, better friends, I have  
In the realms beyond the grave.”

And though, at the point of transition, it may be a consolation to them to see a soul in full anticipation of its glory, yet, as I said before, it is a trial to human nature to see a dying friend now finding it so easy to part. But there is a fulness in Christ that meets every demand of human nature. Just at the moment that he was about to stretch forth his hand, and take the crown of universal empire and place it upon his head, so far from being carried out of his former self, and forgetting the terms and footing he was upon with his disciples, he comes down to a still more infinite condescension than he had ever shown before, thus manifesting to us that he was the same to the last, and that having loved his disciples he loved them unto the end, and that he carried up to heaven the same nature and the same heart and love for us, amidst all the pangs and agonies of the cross. No glory can change him—he is used to that of which he is in full possession as to his Godhead from all eternity, and, therefore, we have in him a friend that cannot forget us. All things are equally present to his mind, and therefore we are assured, when we address him in prayer, that he feels for us and with us as much as if we now had an opportunity, like Mary or Martha, to enter into a private room, and there to receive him as our guest.

If we compare two passages—the only two which allude to our Lord's ascension—we shall find in the contemplation of that event, the most unspeakable cause

of joy and rejoicing—“This same Jesus,” say the angels, “who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” And in what manner did he go up to heaven? We find in the 24th chapter of Luke, that “he led his disciples as far as Bethany, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them, and it came to pass while he blessed them he was parted from them and carried up into heaven.” It was in the very act of stretching forth those very hands which had been once nailed to the cross, as the sign of descending blessedness upon his disciples—it was in this very posture that he ascended into heaven, and therefore we are led to conceive and believe, that when we see him descend he shall be in the same attitude of blessing.

And now, considering that this tenderest of all friends—that this Shepherd that gave his life for the sheep, is a Being in whose hands, and at whose disposal are all things—that He is invested with all power both in heaven and on earth, and that he will come again in his kingly character to sit upon his throne in the solemn scene of judgment both of the quick and of the dead—when we consider that this Being who ascended up to heaven in order to prepare a place for us, is our God—that he is the all-disposing mind at whose command all things are, what have we who believe on him to fear? “If God be for us who can be against us?” What can time or eternity bring to stop us in that path which leads from one degree of glory to another? What have we to fear when heaven is thus familiarized to our minds—when we consider that it is Christ in his human nature who feels for us as man feels for man, and that he is the



Lord and Prince that ruleth over the whole earth? If we love him, may we not dismiss all fear? What have we to apprehend from death? It is only the gate that leads to everlasting life. What have we to fear in the day of judgment? We shall then only hear him say "well done good and faithful servant." I know that none of these hopes, or these consolations would be genuine unless we felt—aye and that in the deep recesses of our hearts that of ourselves we are only lost and hell-deserving sinners, and that a full and free salvation has been purchased for us by that blood, one drop of which in the scales of God outweighs all the sins of the world. If we lay hold on that salvation we may send our fears to the winds of heaven.

O let us, my beloved friends, this day, resolve that we will ascend in heart and mind whither our beloved Saviour is gone—let us often send up our thoughts

to this calm and blessed home, where he now stands advocating our cause at the right hand of the Majesty on high—let us disentangle our minds from this unsatisfied, wretched world—let us keep our glorious inheritance in view—let us constantly brighten our arms, and stand boldly by them, lest any man, or even the power of Death or Hell, should take our crowns from us—let us persevere, let us be constant unto the end, knowing that there is reserved for us an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Christ has risen as the first fruits of them that slept, and has ascended into heaven—let us with patience wait, and in a little time the summons will come to each of us to lay hold on the salvation which is freely offered to each of us, to come up higher, and as Christ is a partner on the throne of his Eternal Father, to be partners on his throne.

THE OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN MONKSTOWN CHURCH, DIOCESE OF DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY, 12<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 1839,

BY THE VEN. THE ARCHDEACON OF RAPHOE,

PSALM CXXXIX. 7.

“Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?”

THIS is, in substance at least, the first question that was asked by Adam, after that disastrous transgression, which introduced, with the knowledge of evil, the bitter and abiding experience of it; and transformed man's consciousness of the Divine presence, from the most exalted of joys, into the most exquisite of pains. It is, also, both in substance, and in terms, the last question that will be asked by too many, among his guilty and ruined descendants, in that great and terrible day, on which it will be rendered to every man according to his deeds; the day, when all that are in their graves shall hear the Judge's voice, and shall “come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”—As the first impulse of the offending Adam was to hide himself from the all-pervading Deity, nor did the knowledge which he had purchased at so dear a rate teach him the utter futility of attempting concealment from God, so the last impulse of those who have trifled away all opportunities of grace and salvation, will

be, when they are quickened, by the pealing trumpet, into sudden and unwelcome light, to say to the mountains, “fall on us,” and to the rocks, “cover us, and hide us from the wrath of Him that sitteth upon the throne.” Vain hope in either case, for “can any hide himself in secret places,” saith the Lord, “that I shall not see him? Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord? whither wilt thou go, then, from my Spirit, whither wilt thou flee from my presence?”

I do not propose, however, brethren, to consume your invaluable time, by dwelling upon a proposition which no sane person will dispute, that God is every where present, and observant of all throughout the universe. We could more easily, at least less unnaturally and unreasonably, incur the presumption of denying, than the absurdity of limiting, the Holy One of Israel. It is not, then, to the abstract doctrine of God's omnipresence, generally considered, that we would require your attention at this time; it is to the personal application of the enquiry, “whether shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall

flee from thy presence?"—It is but too easy and too common to deny in facts, that which we acknowledge in words, and therefore should we be reminded, that the judgment will be according to what we have done, not to what we have proposed, or professed, or resolved to do. May we, then, so consider the subject, under the teaching of God's holy and pervading Spirit, that, to us, without the sad alternative it conveys, may be applied the solemn saying of the Redeemer—"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

We shall, then, in applying the text, describe two classes of characters. Those who practically deny the Omnipresence of God, and those who practically acknowledge it.

We speak only of those who deny *practically*, deny in *act*, this divine attribute—with such as openly and presumptuously deny it in *words* we have no concern in this place. In the world around us, there may be here and there an unhappy wretch, who shall pass all his days in struggling ineffectually with reason and conscience, in hope to disguise from himself the truth, by which he must be condemned; but we cannot believe that there are any in this assembly, who would give utterance to the self-refuting absurdity, "there is no God."—I call it self-refuting, because he who should utter it, would be encompassed, on every side, with witnesses to his own falsehood—the very heaven on which the unbeliever looks, gives him the lie—the very earth on which he treads, gives him the lie—the very heart that beats within him, and the very blood that fills his veins—the very mind that conceives the blasphemy, and the very tongue that expresseth it—all—all give him the

lie. The fearful and wondrous mechanism of his own frame is a voice that speaks without; while an inward conviction of folly, a latent anticipation of punishment, which he cannot wholly stifle and suppress, even while he is uttering the great swelling words of vanity and blasphemy, testify as forcibly and as unequivocally within. No, let him seek, as he may, to banish the unwelcome, the appalling consciousness, all nature is alive with symbols and memorials and witnesses, of the presence of the Eternal. God beams in the sun, whispers in the breeze, sparkles in the ocean, and thunders in the storm; nor can light pervade the scorner's dwelling, nor the wind fall upon his cheek, nor verdure clothe the plains, nor the stars adorn the sky, but a Voice goes up from universal nature, which tells him God is there.—Nay, not only so, but his own heart responds, 'God is here,' and his own understanding confesses, 'God is here,' and his own conscience denounces, 'woe, woe unto thee, the God whom thou deniest is here.'

It is one thing, however, to stifle or resist the utterance of the voice within, another, and a very different, and, it is to be feared, a much more common thing, to put it off with a feigned attention and a dissembling reverence, when it speaks. The perverse ingenuity of man, in devising means to impose upon himself, is indeed such as to vindicate the emphatic declaration of the prophet, that "the heart of man is deceitful above all things." Is it not a matter of experience, that there are some, worshippers only in name, who seem ostentatiously to display, in the house of God itself, how little they fear God, or regard man? Are there none, who go through the whole of what ought to be a

reasonable and spiritual service, without being once impressed with a sense of the Divine Presence, the glory of which, invisibly, pervades his temple? Are there none of whom it may be said, that, by the deliberate admission into their minds of all worldly and frivolous thoughts, and the intentional exclusion of all sounds that might fall heavily upon the ear of conscience, they almost seem here, even here, where God is specially present, as if they were attempting to go from the Spirit, and to flee from the presence of the Judge? Are there not idlers, who come to dose, if not fools, who come to mock? Are there not formalists, who attend the service of God's house as a penance, if not hypocrites, who do it as a pretence? Are there not some, who, in repairing to the courts of the Lord's temple, neither expect, nor desire, any spiritual good, but who only show themselves among God's people, and tolerate God's service, that they may, with greater semblance of decency, and quickened zest of appetite, return to the follies, and to the pleasures, and to the vanities of the world?—who, while they draw near with their lips, leave purposely their hearts afar off, and never, during their whole lives have entered the sanctuary with the solemn consciousness that 'God is there,' nor closed the door of the secret chamber of prayer, with the reverential acknowledgment—'God is here?'

We will, however, trusting that in this case, charity is not credulity, believe, that those who offer not, and intend not to offer worship, even in God's own temple, constitute the great minority. And we will pass from the few, who neither realise the divine presence in the house of prayer, nor out of it, to speak of others, who

do, indeed, in a qualified sense, approach God on the Sabbath, so far as outward ordinances are concerned, who do, while within the precincts of the sanctuary, seem to attain a more lively and immediate recognition of Him than at other places, and at other times, who are not in the church, what they are in the world, because there, if no where else, they feel themselves beneath the glance of an eye that is all pervading, within the grasp of a hand that is irresistible. But has that eye lost its keenness, or is that arm withered of its power, when the sun rises on the secular portion of the week, on the other six days which God allots to man? Does the dense and turbid atmosphere of the world impede or perplex the vision of God, as it confuses or intercepts our own? "He that formed the eye shall he not see? He that planted the ear shall he not hear?" Such, you might almost imagine, is their belief, could you follow into the scenes of active and busy life, too many of those who have yet spent a fair proportion of the Sabbath in the apparent worship of God. You might almost imagine it, could you behold their recreations and amusements, their convivial parties or their domestic relaxations; could you listen to their conversation, which, from morning perhaps, until evening, will not breathe a syllable to evidence that they are living for any better or worthier purpose, than to lay up much goods for many years, to take their ease, eat, drink, and be merry. Alas, were we to trace the congregation, the decorous, attentive congregation of the Sabbath, throughout the week, and amid the world, how much should we be constrained to witness of entanglement in the pollutions of a world that lieth in wickedness, what utter disre-



gard, by some who are called Christians, of the great end and object of their being! what entire forgetfulness of that strict and solemn account, which must be rendered at the judgment-seat of God! what frivolous, intemperate, uncharitable, unchristian speeches uttered in the hearing of Him, who remembers and records them all! what covetous and inordinate desires, cherished in the view of Him, who looks upon the heart, yea of whom, it is awfully testified, that there is not a thought in the heart but he knoweth it altogether? Surely such inconsistent persons, whatever attention and interest they may evince, in the performance of Sabbath duties, cannot form a right estimate of Him, who is an everpresent God, who is with them at their going out and coming in, at their lying down and rising up, who is "about their path, and about their bed, and spieth out all their ways"—surely these cannot set God away before them? Ah, if they did, how many of those vipers of sin, which will, in the end, entwine their pestiferous and loathsome folds around the late awakened soul, crushing it into irremediable despair, would be stifled in the moment of their birth—how many would be spared, in the hour of impending death and judgment, that exceeding great and bitter cry, which heaven and earth may hear, but cannot answer; "whither shall I go from thy Spirit, whither shall I flee from thy presence?" earth cover me, mountains hide me, hell conceal me in thy deepest recesses, from the kindled wrath of God and of the Lamb!

But we gladly turn from this appalling picture—a description, alas, too often substantiated, and embodied in the experience of

the departing sinner, too late to profit himself, and often, alas, too secret to advantage others, to consider—Who they are that practically realise God's omnipresence.

All the value and the virtue of experimental religion may be regarded as embodied in this simple position, that while it is impossible to fly *from* God, it is possible to fly *to* God—that his presence is itself the safest covert from its own terrors; and that the Spirit, from which none can go, may thus be transformed from an accusing, disquieting, condemning spirit, into a messenger of mercy; into a dove of peace; into a herald of salvation. The whole tendency of corrupt nature is to draw men away from God; the whole tendency of grace that bringeth salvation, is to draw man more closely towards Him; and accordingly it will be found, that the farther men recede from God, the more awful and appalling become the terrors with which he is invested; and the more nearly we approach towards Him, the more conspicuously do we discern the milder attributes of love and mercy, gentleness, forbearance, long suffering, tempering the otherwise unendurable brilliancy of those perfections, which tend alike to the humiliation of the human nature and the exaltation of the divine. God beheld from afar, is a consuming fire. God, to those who find access to Him, through Christ Jesus, is a reconciled Father in Him. The very attributes of the divine nature, which man unrepentant, unrenowned, unsanctified, recoils from and trembles to behold, are those which man, penitent, regenerated, justified by the blood, and sanctified by the Spirit of

Christ, hails as the pledges, the assurances, yea, the very agents and instruments of his own salvation. How could it ever have entered into the heart of man, untaught, unenlightened from above, to cite the divine attributes of justice and faithfulness, as combining to accomplish, and to certify the salvation of the returning penitent? Does not justice, it might be asked, the justice of a God, all holiness, demand the punishment of sin? Does not faithfulness, the faithfulness of a God, all true, enforce the execution of the sentence denounced upon the sinner from the beginning? Yes, would be the reply, did reason alone return it, but what saith the Scripture? "God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Here then, is one instance out of many, by which it might be proved, that *only a close* contemplation of God, could impart an accurate perception of what He is in reality, to those who have been enlightened by the Spirit, to behold "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." The persons then, of whom I have in my second description spoken, are those who have discerned this, and who act daily upon the knowledge which has been imparted to them from above. They are those, to whom the language of the psalmist is the language of experience; who have not only asked with him, as in the text "whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" but who have been enabled to say, with him, "O God, my God, early will I seek thee, create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me: restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit,—mine iniquities cer-

tify against me, but I flee unto thee to hide me. O let me so dwell in the secret place of the Most High, that I may abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Plant me in the courts of the Lord, that I may flourish in the courts of the house of my God."

Doubtless there is a portion of those who hear me, I trust that it is a large, and I pray that it may be an increasing proportion, who have thus attained to a practical knowledge of the omnipresence of God, who may thus be said, to "set God always before them," in that they rise with Him, and walk with Him, and rest with Him; not only acting daily upon the example of the psalmist, "thy voice shalt thou hear in the morning O Lord," while, with every evening their prayer rises before Him as incense, and the lifting up of their hands is an evening sacrifice, but, who likewise maintain a continued, though tacit intercourse with Him throughout the day: who can say with the psalmist, "after thee do I seek all the day long," and of whom it may be said, in the emphatic words of the Apostle, they "are sober and watch unto prayer."—

And I would fain believe that these are not only the quiet and the contemplative, and the secluded; not only the minister of Christ, whose best preparation for public duty, is the loneliness of meditation and prayer; nor the man of easy and independent circumstances, who may devote, if he will, all his hours, except those which are demanded for the necessary refreshment of the body, and a just attention to domestic claims, to acquainting himself with God, that he may be at peace: nor the christian female, whose duties and engagements rarely lead

her beyond the hallowed circle of her home, and whose very sphere of life, let her be thankful for it, is such as to favour and facilitate access to God—for surely those must themselves repair to the Good Shepherd who are desirous to feed his lambs. But they are, we would believe, to be traced and identified, also, in the walks of active life, that we may discriminate the Christian mechanic, the conscious disciple of an Omnipresent Saviour, while labouring in his craft; the christian tradesman or merchant while occupied in his commercial concerns; the christian philosopher, while exploring the secrets of nature, and fathoming the mysteries of science; the christian student, while selecting from the great storehouse of antiquity, weapons to wield in the christian warfare; we trust that wherever there is an individual corresponding to these various grades and classifications, to be found amongst you, that they are to be distinguished from others who follow the same pursuits, but not on the same principles, who are alike in all respects, to man's judgment of outward appearances, but different to God who looketh upon the heart, different in this, that with the one, toil, of whatever kind, is both sweetened and sanctified by God's presence, whilst with the other it is undertaken only with worldly views, prosecuted in a worldly spirit, and directed to a worldly end.

And in what does the distinction consist. Is it that those, who are habitually conscious of the divine presence, and controlled by the Divine Spirit, are more remiss, more slothful, more negligent in business, more heedless of employing all lawful, equitable, and consistent means to bring their undertakings to a prosperous

issue, more impatient of the station in which it has pleased God's good providence to place them, and more ready to abstract from the hours of occupation, shreds and fragments of the time, which they cannot honestly call their own, under pretext of seeking Him who is ever nigh?

No, the distinction between him that serveth God, and him that serveth Him not, consists not, in the superior assiduity, ability, and faithfulness, with which the latter serves man, but, in the consistency, uprightness and devotedness, with which the former serves God—in the comparative calmness and composure, with which a true believer, in whatever condition, encounters opposition, receives disappointment, endures trial, bears up under provocation; in the readiness with which, time and opportunity permitting, his lips will utter of the fulness of his heart, in things relating to God and his own soul; in the promptitude, the earnestness, with which he will avail himself of every suitable occasion, to promote the best interests of others, whether by the expression of christian sympathy, or the act of christian kindness; by the contented cheerfulness with which he will be prepared to do, or to suffer, or to sacrifice whatever God may require, concerned only to do his duty in the state to which God's allwise providence has called him, and as one who is not his own, but bought with a price, to glorify God in his body and his spirit which are God's.

It may be objected, that we have pictured Christians as they ought to be, rather than as they are. Brethren, we have at least described them, such as the word of God has a tendency to make them; yea, such as they certainly would be, did they but rightly apprehend and

apply the single attribute of the God whom they serve, of which they are so emphatically reminded in the text. What duty would require a stimulus, we may ask, or what sin would be without a check; what holy and lovely dispositions would not be cultivated, what root of bitterness that would not be cut down, at its first appearance above the soil of the heart, did we but bear about with us the conviction "Thou God seest me;" thou seest in me the purchase of the blood of thy dear Son, thou seest in me, one, whom thine own Spirit condescends to sanctify; thou seest in me, a candidate for, an aspirant to, an inheritor of immortality; thou seest in me, a natural born enemy, yet now a child of adoption; one who was alienated by wicked works, and estranged by evil courses, yet now, made by grace, a dear son, a pleasant child, a child pleasant to a Father's eye, dear to a Father's heart. And can I knowingly commit iniquity, which thou art of purer eyes than to behold, while encompassed by thy presence? Can I omit the duty, yea, rather the privilege, which brings me nearer to thee, while surrounded by thy Spirit? O turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, that they may be fixed more steadfastly upon Thee!—O let thy Presence, which is my safety from danger, be also my preservative from sin; and while discharging all my duties beneath a Parent's eye, and receiving all my blessings from a Parent's hand, should the question be asked of me by the wicked, or the worldly, by the enemy without, or the traitor within, "Wilt thou also go away?" O let the prompt answer of my soul be returned, not to them, but to Thee, "Whither could I go from thy Spirit, whither could I flee from thy Presence—Thou hast the

words of eternal life—with Thee is the fountain of life, and in thy light shall I see light—whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none on earth that I would desire in comparison of Thee—when my flesh and my heart fail, Thou alone canst be the strength of my heart, and my portion for evermore."

Brethren, this subject has a voice for all. We *must* see God, sooner or later, we must see him face to face. In this stage of weakness and mortality, who can say how soon?—and when we once see Him, as he is manifested to the disembodied spirit, we shall never lose sight of Him again—whether the light of his countenance beam on us, "with joy unspeakable and full of glory," or whether it be anguish that cannot be expressed, yet agony that must for ever be endured!—O then, while you may, take shelter *from* God *with* God; approach the majesty of the Father, protected by the righteousness of the Son, prepared by the purifying of the Spirit; let the presence of God become your glory, the Spirit of God your defence. This it will be, if you only come to God through Christ, humbling yourself by reason of your manifold iniquities, and desiring to carry hence in your hearts such a sense of his presence, that wherein you have done iniquity, you may do it no more.

But, if there be amongst us here a mind still unenlightened, a conscience still unawakened, a heart still unimpressed, with what words shall we take leave of him? Go, we say, but whither wilt thou go from God's Spirit? Fly, but whither wilt thou fly from God's presence? Ascend to heaven—He is there; make thy bed in hell—He is there also. Take the wings of the morning, and remain in the uttermost part of the



sea, even there His hand shall lead thee, and His right hand shall hold thee; and oh! if, from that crushing grasp of omnipotence, revealed to judgment, Christ do not set thee free, who shall? and how wilt thou bear the fiery arrows of his indignation, if thou art unprotected by the shield of faith!—But now is the time to seek and to find a refuge against the day of wrath—God willeth not the death of a sinner—oh how is it to be deplored even in tears of blood that the sinner should be determined on his own!

“Cast us not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from us.” Brethren, you have heard these words to-day before, would that again, before you leave the sanctuary, and mingle with the things of earth, the prayer which they embody might be breathed on high by every heart that throbs within these walls, and mount as incense to the throne of Heaven. Now is the time to press home to our bosoms the solemn truth that every time when, in the sins, or the vanities, or the cares of earth, we have sought a hiding place from the Spirit, or an oblivion of the presence of our God, we have been treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath—for there is a treasury of vengeance on high, and hour by hour, and

day by day, we have been casting in our sins to augment its fearful stores. Perhaps with some of us, the night of this frail existence is far spent, and the day of immortality is at hand—a day of undying remorse or of unutterable joy. Perhaps this warning may be the last which the long suffering of God may ever vouchsafe to some of our souls; but of this, at least, be certain, that the next time, by deliberate sin, we vex and quench God’s influence, we shall desperately challenge him to cast us away from his presence, and take his holy Spirit from us.

O may we then, as we value the souls our Redeemer bought, as we would attain to the harmony and glory of the mansions of light, as we would escape the weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth of those once warned by God’s ministers, but now for ever lost, come to Christ the Saviour; let his Spirit be as a lamp unto our feet, his presence a light unto our paths, that “when He shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through Him who liveth and reigneth with the Father and the Holy Ghost now and ever.” Amen.  
Amen.

## PORTFOLIO.

“ As the men of the world do live on their earthly portions, so a man that hath God for his portion, lives upon his God. Look how the poor man lives upon his labours—the covetous man on his bags—the ambitious man on his honours—the voluptuous man on his pleasures ;—so doth a Christian live upon his God : in all his duties, and in all his straits and trials, and in all his contentments and engagements, he still lives upon his God. When he is under the frowns of the world, then he lives upon the smiles of God ; when he is under the hatred of the world, then he lives upon the love of God ; and when he is under the reproaches of the world, then he lives upon his credit with God ; when he is under the threatenings of the world, then he lives upon the protection of God ; and when he is under the designs and plottings of the world, then he lives upon the wisdom and counsel of God ; when he is under the crosses and losses of the world, then he lives upon the fulness and goodness of God. God is always watchful and wakeful to do his people good ; he never wants skill or will to help them.—*Brooks on 142d Psalm, A.D. 1662.*

“ When so few are saved (as God’s word saith) what cause have we to shake ourselves out of ourselves, and to ask our souls, whither goest thou ? where shalt thou lodge at night ? where are thy charters and writs of thy heavenly inheritance ? Alas, security is the bane and wreck of most part of the world ! Sleep not sound

till you find yourself in that case, that you dare look death in the face, and durst hazard your soul upon eternity. Oh ! make your heaven sure, and try how you came by conversion ; that it be not a white and well-lustred profession. Many are beguiled with this, that they are free of scandalous and crying abominations ; but the tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is for the fire. The man that is not born again cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Ah ! that men, who never had a sore heart for sin, should ever think they met with Christ.

“ Woe, woe, be to them, that put on Christ’s name, and shame his love with a loose and profane life ; their feet, tongue, hands and eyes, give a shameless lie to the Holy Gospel which they profess. Alas ! that the holy profession of Christ is made a stage-garment, to bring home a vain name.”—*Rutherford’s Letters.*

“ Begin the Christian race from the cross, and whenever you faint or grow weary look back to it.”—*Thos. Adam.*

“ Mercy is like the rainbow, which God set in the heavens, to remember mankind. We must never look for it after night. It shines not in the other world. If we refuse mercy here, we must have justice to eternity.”—*Jeremy Taylor.*

“ He that *cannot* reason is a fool ; he that *will not* reason is a bigot ; but he that *dares not* reason is a slave.”

“ Study without prayer is atheism ; prayer without study is presumption.”—*Bishop Saunderson.*

“ Prayer requires more of the heart than of the tongue, of sighs than of words, of faith than of discourse. The eloquence of prayer consists in the fervency of desire, in the simplicity of faith, and in the earnestness and perseverance of charity. The abundance and choice of fine thoughts, studied and vehement motions, and the order and politeness of the expressions, are things which compose a mere human harangue, not an humble and Christian prayer.”—*Quesnel.*

“ No cloud can overshadow a Christian, but his faith will discern a rainbow in it.”—*Bishop Horne.*

“ Happy the stones that God chuseth to be living stones in his spiritual temple ! though they be hammered and hewed to be polished for it, by afflictions and the

inward work of mortification and repentance. It is worth the enduring all, to be fitted for this building ; for all other buildings, and all the parts of them, shall be demolished and come to nothing, from the foundation to the cope-stone ; all your houses, both cottages and palaces, the elements shall melt away, and the earth with all the works in it shall be consumed ;—but this spiritual building shall grow up to heaven, and being come to perfection, shall abide for ever in perfection of beauty and glory. In it shall be found no unclean thing nor person, but only they that are written in the Lamb's book of life.”—*Leighton.*

“ This is the comfort of a child of God, that though he brought sin with him into the world, yet he shall not carry it with him out of the world. God hath so wisely ordered and appointed it, that as death came in by sin, so also shall sin itself be destroyed by death.”—*Bishop Hopkins.*

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## GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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REV. ROBT. J. M'GHEE,

REV. HENRY HARDY,

### A SERMON,

PREACHED IN HAROLD'S CROSS CHURCH, DUBLIN,

ON EASTER SUNDAY, 1839.

BY THE REV. ROBT. J. M'GHEE, A.B.

Chaplain.

THE ANTHEM FOR EASTER SUNDAY.

“ Christ our passover is sacrificed for us : therefore let us keep the feast ; not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness : but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.

Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more : death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once ; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin ; but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Rom. vi. 9.*

Christ is risen from the dead ; and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death ; by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die : even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” 1 Cor. xv. 20.

THESE are blessed truths which are extracted from the word of God by our Church, for the anthem instead of a collect, and brought forward here for our solemn consideration on this day. Each text here might form an instructive sermon, the whole might furnish an interesting series of discourses on the resurrection of our blessed Lord, and the blessings it conveys to his people.

My difficulty is not to enlarge on the subject, but to condense the truths I present to you, which I trust the Lord will, by his Spirit, write on your hearts, and enable

you to examine, more at large, when you return to your homes.

I will call your attention to the glorious view that is presented to us of the Lord Jesus Christ in each portion of the Scripture here, and to the practical inference which this is made to bear on the faith, the hope and conduct of the believer.

Now, in the first extract, we read, 1 Cor. v. 7, 8. “ Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast ; not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice, and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” In this first



passage, *the death of Jesus is set before us as a deliverance from condemnation*, and also its practical influence on the heart and life of the believer.

In the second passage, (Romans, vi. 9, 10, 11,) "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." There, *the resurrection of our glorious Redeemer is set before us as a pledge and assurance of present deliverance from sin and death to all his believing people, and the present resurrection of our souls from spiritual death to spiritual life.*

In the third passage, (1 Cor. xv. 20, 21, 22,) "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Here *the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is given to us as a pledge of the fulfilment of all the blessings that are set before us, as purchased by his death and resurrection.* We have a pledge of the fulfilment of all these blessings to ourselves, in our own actual resurrection from the dead. Now, may the Lord apply these truths to our hearts and consciences for Christ's sake.

I. In the first passage, **THE DEATH OF JESUS IS SET BEFORE US AS A DELIVERANCE FROM CONDEMNATION** This is presented to us in the declaration, that the Lord Jesus is the anti-type of the passover; that the passover, the history of which you heard to-day, (Exodus xii.) was a type of our blessed Redeemer, and that the Lord Jesus Christ is the fulfilment of this; "Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast."

Now, we shall briefly consider the parallel between the passover and Christ. The wrath of God had gone out against the whole land of Egypt, which we see in his tremendous judgments. This last he poured out on the land, previous to the deliverance of his people and the destruction of Pharaoh and his hosts, this last of these judgments by which he denounced the first-born in every house in the land to death, "from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, to the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon." There was one mode of preservation from this destruction which he appointed for the Israelites; that they should take a lamb for every house, that they should slay the lamb, and take the blood, and strike the lintel and side posts of their doors with it, and the Lord said, v. 13, "the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are, and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."

Wherein is there a parallel between this and Christ? God's wrath has gone forth, not against houses or nations, but against individuals, against every individual sinner upon the face of this earth. The wrath of God is proclaimed, "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men," but the glorious Gospel commands a guilty world to lift up its eyes and "behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

"Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us." Whenever a guilty sinner depends upon the atoning blood of the Lamb, that blood is sprinkled on him, as the blood of the lamb was on the door posts of the houses of the Israelites;—and when judgment shall be poured out on an ungodly world, when the wrath that is proclaimed shall be revealed, he shall be passed over in that day, being sprinkled with the blood of the Lamb. Oh! what it shall be to be passed over; when the

trumpet shall sound, and the wrath of God shall be revealed from heaven !

There was no deliverance whatever from that wrath throughout the land of Egypt but by the blood of the Lamb. There is "no name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved, but the name of Christ,"—there is no deliverance for any sinner, but in the blood of "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world."

No Israelite was protected because he was an Israelite, there was no deliverance in the land of Goshen to any individual because he was an inhabitant of that land ; there had been no deliverance even for Moses and Aaron, if they had neglected God's command, to strike the blood of the lamb on the door posts of their houses, the destroying angel dare not have passed over them, no more than he could have disobeyed the command of God,—there was nothing for them but the sprinkling of blood. There is no deliverance in outward privileges for men that are called christians—there is no deliverance in the Protestant church no more than in the Popish church, or in the Pagan temple,—there is no deliverance for any sinner, unless he is sprinkled with the blood of the Lamb. No outward privilege, no outward form of worship, no repetition of it, nothing whatever, nothing can save but the blood of the Lamb—if you are not sprinkled with that, you cannot be passed over in the day of wrath.

The Lamb was to be "roast with fire." If you look to mount Calvary, if you see the fierceness of the wrath of God poured out upon the blessed Jesus, you will see the force of that command.

All the Israelites were to eat of the Lamb, and they were to eat it with bitter herbs, and with unleavened bread. All those who are saved must feed upon the Lamb of God ;—except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you."—(St. John, vi, 53.) You understand what the meaning

of that is ;—it is not eating carnally, as you eat your food, but our blessed Lord explains it, "I am the bread of life, he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst," (John, vi. 35.) you must feed on him in your heart, it cannot be more beautifully expressed than in the communion service, "feed on him in thy heart, by faith with thanksgiving."

They were to eat it with bitter herbs, and with unleavened bread. Christ must be eaten with the bitter herbs of repentance for sin, there must be a conviction of our own guilt and misery, and there must be a sympathy of sorrow in beholding the Lamb of God, who "bore our sins in his own body on the tree," who "became a sin-offering and a curse for us." We cannot really think that hell is our individual portion, and that the only refuge we have is to look to him who died for us on Calvary, without feeling something of that compunction which is expressed in the words of the prophet, "they shall look upon him whom they have pierced and mourn ;"—while we rejoice in the glorious redemption which Christ accomplished, we cannot but feel sympathy for the sufferings by which it was achieved.

They were to eat it with unleavened bread. You have that explained by the Holy Ghost in the passage before us,— "Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us, therefore, let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." Leaven, you know, is that which, by being put into bread, makes it seem different from what it really is ;—a portion of flour and water, without barm or leaven, preserves its natural size, and seems to contain only what it does contain ; but when leaven is put into it, it is puffed up and assumes a different appearance from what it really is ; the genuine quantity of matter it contains is not seen, because it is

puffed up with barm. This is, therefore, a term used as an emblem of hypocrisy in Scripture,—having a different appearance from the reality; “beware,” says our Lord, “of the leaven of the pharisees, which is hypocrisy;”—and here, in opposition to that, “the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” We must have a sincere, honest, genuine conviction of our own guilt and misery. No mock professions, no form of words, no form of godliness, where there is not power, sincerity, genuine religion in the heart—nothing of that kind will do;—we must be sincere;—there may be a lamp, but, if there be no oil in the vessel, the lamp will go out when the cry is made, “behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.”

II. From the second passage, (Romans vi. 9, 10, 11,) I would deduce, that *the resurrection of our glorious Redeemer is the pledge and assurance of present deliverance from sin and death, and the present resurrection of our souls from spiritual death to spiritual life.*

See how the church provides instruction for us in the service of this day. In the first place, we have the apostolic testimony, that Christ is the anti-type of the passover, and in the first lesson, we have an account of the passover. Then we have the second lesson, (Romans vi.) and we have taken from it the great and eternal truth that is deducible from that chapter, concerning the resurrection of our blessed Lord and Saviour;—“Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him, for in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Now, I would just mention two things, Christ has died—died to sin—and Christ has risen, and risen to God. Now, to what have his people died? they have died to sin and risen to God. He has

died to sin, they have died to sin, he has risen to God, they have risen to God—“In that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God, likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Now observe, God does not command us to reckon a lie, God does not command his people to reckon themselves what they are not. Consider that, therefore, when he says—“reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord”—you have God’s authority to reckon yourselves so and so. Now, there is a great mistake on this subject in the minds of many persons who call themselves Christians, and who are Christians. They do not see the great blessedness, the glory that is set before them in this and other similar passages—“to be dead indeed unto sin,” they do not know the meaning of that—they make great mistakes on this subject—they think it is a total insensibility to sin, so that sin is to have no strength, or power, or energy within them—they think it is attaining to a certain state in which they are, as it were, completely shut out from sin, and as insensible to the approaches of temptation, and as insensible to the allurements of sin as if they were dead. That is what a great many Christians understand by this. What is the result? They are very unhappy, and the reason is this, because they do not feel this to be the case in themselves—they think this is a state set before them to which they ought to attain, but they do not feel that they have attained or can attain it, and therefore they are very unhappy—and well they may, because if they expect to attain that state, they expect what Scripture does not warrant them to look for—they expect to attain that which no man on earth ever did attain but “the man Christ Jesus:” there is no such thing, for the experience of the believer runs quite the contrary way—the experience of the be-

liever is, not that he is dead to sin, but terribly alive to it, he feels terribly the power of sin in his own heart, he feels daily more and more the corruption that is within him, and he grows in humility, for the very reason that he grows in experience of the evil and corruption of his own heart—this was the experience of St. Paul, Romans vii. “I know, that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not; for the good that I would I do not, but the evil that I would not, that I do.” And so believer you find it. “Now, if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me, I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me; for I delight in the law of God after the inward man, but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” That is the experience of the apostle Paul, and your experience, believer. There is not a believer in this church, that if you ask him, and he tell you the truth, will not say, that is my sad experience, and that is the reason that every sinner who comes into church must take up the language of our confession as the language of his own heart—that “there is no health in him,” that he is a “miserable sinner!” Therefore you see that is a gross misrepresentation of the text; for if the sinner was to reckon himself in that state he would be blind and ignorant.

I have met persons who held the doctrine of perfection; and I remember well a poor dear friend of mine, telling me that he lived without sin; but thank God, he was brought to see afterwards how blind he was. But that is the blindness and ignorance of the sinner who thinks he could attain to such a state—“If he says that he has no sin, he deceives himself, and the truth is not in him”—but a lie is in him—he believes a lie—he is blind and ignorant.

But what is the truth set before us here? that as Jesus died to sin “so likewise reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin.” Now the question is, How did Jesus die to sin? He never died to it in that sense—he could not do so, because sin never lived in him in that way—he could not become insensible to the temptations and the lusts that you feel and that I feel, because he had them not—he was “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners”—the Lamb of God, the spotless, holy Lamb of God even from the womb: he could not become dead to a principle that never existed in him, but still the Scripture asserts he did die to sin—and as he died to it so are you, in that sense “likewise reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin.” How then did he die to sin? he died that he should “finish transgression and make an end of sin”—he made an end of the curse, and the judgment pronounced against sin by God: “he bare our sins in his own body on the tree.” Let the believer in Christ Jesus—let the sinner that depends on his blessed Saviour, reckon himself to be completely dead unto sin, so that his sin is cancelled and made an end of for ever. Now to illustrate this: when Jesus died, his hands were dead, his feet were dead, his eyes were dead—every nerve and muscle were dead: when man is dead, every single part of his body is dead. Now how are Christ’s people dead? how are they considered dead? (they are called throughout the whole Scripture, members of Christ’s body) as Christ was dead, every one that believes in him, was not only dead in Christ but dead with Christ—that is, as sin could not be charged against the blessed hands of Jesus which had been pierced on the cross, for sin—as sin could not be charged against the blessed feet of Jesus which were nailed to the cross for sin, so sin can no more be charged on the sinner who believes in Christ than it could be on Christ himself; for there, sin is made an end of, cancelled, atoned for, finished—there is the blessing of the



rich salvation finished in Christ Jesus. Look to 1 Cor. vi. 15—"Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ." Then again—the xii. chap. of the same epistle, you see this image most remarkably set forth (12 and 13 verses.) "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many are one body, so also is Christ." Christ is there spoken of in his glorious capacity as the head of his church, and all the members of his church are there spoken of as members of his body—"for by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." And in the 27th verse he uses the same expression—"Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular." "Reckon ye yourselves, to be dead indeed unto sin"—as Christ is dead to it, reckon yourselves to be dead to it—"but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord," or as the original expresses it, *in* Jesus Christ our Lord, dead in Christ, and risen in Christ, that as his heart was dead when he was dead, and beat with life when he arose, so, his people who believe in him are alive unto God in Christ Jesus—he has life, they have life, and their life is in Christ their living head. What is the life of my soul? It is not this animal life—that life wherewith I speak to you, by which I breathe, by which I move these limbs—that is the animal existence that will perish; but the life of my immortal soul, what is that? Christ Jesus, my glorious Lord and Master. Look again, how you have this truth set forth in the Epistle of the day, (Col. iii.) "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." I do not see the life of my immortal soul, I feel my animal life: I do not see the life of my soul—why? it is "hid with Christ in God"—and is it ever to be seen? Yes, "when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory;"

then the glorious life that Jesus has bought shall be manifested to his believing people, then "when Christ who is our life shall appear, ye shall also appear with him in glory."

You have the pledge of this given in the next passage of this anthem: "Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept; for since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." You have there the pledge that in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ there will be the actual resurrection of the bodies of believers. Here, in Romans vi. he is speaking of the spiritual resurrection of the soul; in Cor. xv. he is speaking of the actual resurrection of the body. In Romans vi. he gives us the resurrection of Jesus as a present pledge and assurance of our eternal life. He tells us that we are privileged by God's eternal truth to trust with the full assurance of hope, that as our glorious Lord died to finish transgression and make an end of sin, so all believers' sins are cancelled for ever, and they have eternal life in him; as if Christ had said—I am with thee, and give you the blessed pledge, "because I live, ye shall live also." 'Tis not because you are any thing—not because you deserve any thing—that there is any good in you—not because you are righteous or fit to come before the presence of God; for in yourselves you have no fitness;—you would be cast away if God were to enter into judgment with you; but since Christ, your glorious surety, has paid your debt, therefore, "because he lives, you shall live also," and when you see him you shall be like him, O believer, for you shall see him as he is. O blessed hope! let us then be "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

We have, in the third passage, our resurrection in the resurrection of Jesus.

We have a fact set before us—we shall rise—“even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” Of course you ought not to confine yourself to the mere context of this anthem. Look to verse 23 : “Every one in his own order ; Christ the first fruits : afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming, &c.” There is the glorious resurrection of the body—they shall rise in glory ;—yes, they shall ; there is the blessed hope for you ; in the midst of all your conflicts and all your trials, that poor body of sin and death shall rise in glory, that same body shall be changed and raised in that blessed day when your Lord shall come. You shall be raised, as you find in the 44th verse, “It is sown a natural body—it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body ; and so it is written : The first man Adam was made a living soul—the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.” There you have a blessed pledge of your resurrection in that of your glorious Lord ; then you shall be raised like him, as the same Apostle says in Phil. iii. 21. speaking of Christ, “who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” Again, as the Apostle John says, 1st Epistle, iii. 1, 2. “Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God : therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be ; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” Oh, look at this blessed privilege, “now are we the sons of God.” This is a subject of faith, “dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord.” “It doth not yet appear what we shall be,” that is a subject of hope ; “but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is ;” as David says, “when I awake after

thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it.”

We shall rise to meet him : so you have in 1 Thessalonians, where the Apostle is consoling his believing brethren, for those that have fallen asleep in Jesus, “I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep.” Think how important to you and me—how soon shall we be asleep ! The believer falls asleep in Jesus ; it is a sleep,—it is not the death of the ungodly—it is not that death of the body which is but the transition to the eternal death of the immortal soul, preparatory to the tremendous resurrection of body and soul, when the righteous judgment of God shall be revealed against it, to cast it into outer darkness,—that is not the death here spoken of. Well, what have we concerning those that sleep ? You that are looking to fall asleep in Jesus, and to awake up after his likeness, and you who are mourning, not as those who have no hope over those who have fallen asleep in Jesus, hear what he says concerning the glorious resurrection,—“I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others who have no hope ; for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, them also who sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him.” You may sorrow indeed, but not as those who have no hope ;—you may sorrow, and you must sorrow, but you have a sweet hope, a blessed hope, and a hope founded, not on ignorance but on knowledge,—“for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again,”—well, and do not we believe this ? Don’t we believe that Christ died and rose again ? is not our glorious Lord risen ? Even so, as surely and as certainly, “them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” Oh, sweet expression ! observe, what millions of indirect passages of Scripture testify the glorious Godhead of Jesus, the glorious Godhead of Immanuel : what would it all be, if he was not Jehovah ? If he was but a mere creature, there would be no hope, no salvation for us—

none but God could be the Saviour of the world. "For this we say unto you, by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain, shall not prevent (or go before,) them that are asleep;" those that are alive on the earth, they shall not be one second before those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God," what a glorious time! "thy kingdom come,"—do you say amen, even so, come Lord Jesus? Oh, look at the hope set before you, and you will be able to say, "the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Oh, blessed day, happy day for the Lord's people,—oh, what a day to those who belong to the Church of Christ!

If there be any of you who are looking to this blessed hope, ah, think of it,—“comfort one another with these words.” Oh, if any of you be careless and dead in trespasses and sins, look at the salvation and glory of the Lord's people. O, look at the hope set before sinners—turn to the stronghold while yet you may, and look unto Him, that you may be saved. And you who are believers, and yet have your hands hanging down and your knees weak, lift them up, lift up your eyes and hearts—your blessed Lord is near. Now, is not this a blessed portion of Scripture? May the Lord enable us to meditate on it,—may he bring it home to our hearts!

Then consider the practical influences that are by this means to be produced on the mind, life, and conversation,—“therefore let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” Go back for a moment to Rom. vi. where the apostle urges them to reckon themselves to be dead to

sin, and alive to God,—“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Verse 12—“let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.” Observe, because you are dead to it, let it not reign in your mortal bodies:—that implies, that it is in your bodies—it will attack you—it will press on you—it will endeavour to drag you captive, “there is a law in your members, warring against the law of your mind,” but do not let it “reign in your bodies, that you should obey it in the lusts thereof.” Why?—because you are dead to it, you have the victory, Christ has vanquished it, it cannot condemn you. Holiness is not the way to pardon, but pardon is the way to holiness,—holiness is not the way to forgiveness, but forgiveness is the way to holiness,—holiness is not the cause of eternal life, but the gift of eternal life is the cause of holiness;—holiness is not the way to eternal life in that sense, as the means of obtaining it. In another sense it is: holy influences must be produced on the life and conversation, before we can attain eternal life; and, therefore, the Apostle says, “Without holiness no man shall see the Lord,” none can be a believer in Christ, who is living an unholy, an ungodly life,—“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”

Now, my beloved friends, think of these things, and may the Lord bring them home to all our hearts. May the blessed Spirit enable us to rejoice in the rich salvation that is in Christ, and to live to his praise and glory. Now, unto Him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, unto him be praise and glory, ever world without end.

MAN'S FALL AND RESTORATION.

## A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE CHURCH OF ST. ANNE'S, SHANDON, CORK,

ON SUNDAY, THE 17<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 1839,

BY THE REV. HENRY HARDY, A.B.

Curate of Carrigaline.

GENESIS iii. 24.

"So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

THE Bible, like the emblem of eternity, reverts upon itself: the path which its revealed intelligence describes from first to last is the completion of a perfect circle: Paradise forfeited and man banished by divine *justice*, is the sad announcement at the very outset of revelation; while Paradise re-opened and man recovered by divine *grace*, is the blessed consummation at its close. When man blindly fell from an obedience that could hardly be called a trial, *grace*, like a gushing spring, poured forth from Paradise in living streams upon the moral desert to which he was driven, and ever since, it winds its healing course among a multitude of "banished ones," "whom no man can number of every kindred, and tribe, and tongue, and people," till springing up within their hearts unto eternal life, it finds its own level in *Paradise again*. When man by unprovoked transgression brought down the heavy judgments consequent upon God's violated law, *grace*, like a seedling from the tree of life, was borne by the breath of mercy beyond the forbidden sanctuary of Eden, upon the world's waste wilderness, where, guarded by *love*, nourished by *righteousness*, and watered by *blood*, it struck its roots into the soil of this fallen

earth, and spread its branches into the atmosphere of time; in growth advancing ever, till it possess the whole earth with its roots, and purify the whole heaven with its boughs, and do eventually change creation into *Paradise again*—every leaf endued with healing efficacy—every fruit with vivifying power—blessing the immortal spirits of men with salvation, and crowning their restored inheritance with kindly shade, and rest as blissful as secure, till *grace*, begun in Paradise is perfected in Paradise, and creating goodness merges into re-creating love.

The Bible is, in truth, the history of our fall, the matter of our faith, the character of our restoration; it is the exposition of one precept—the elucidation of one promise: the precept—"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ;" the promise—"thou shalt be saved." Every avenue of hope which the Bible lays open to the spiritual wayfarer bears straight on Christ, "the restorer;" *the law* "is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ;" "to Him give all the *prophets* witness," and the *Gospel* testifies of "the grace of God, which is by Jesus Christ." Whether, therefore, we turn to the simple and unpretending worship of the Patriarchs, the solemn ordinances and inspiring ceremonies of



the Mosaic ritual, the exalted predictions of the Prophets, or the doctrines, precepts, and promises of the Gospel, with the duties, principles, and motives, which it inculcates—they all, like rays converging on a focus, are concentrated upon Him, who is the sun of righteousness—the source and centre of all life and light, and heat, and sweet attraction. Hence the Paradise of God with its living streams, refreshing fruits, and sacramental tree of immortality, will not unaptly illustrate the Holy Scripture, abounding as it does with plenteous food for the hungry, and copious draughts for the thirsty, “without money and without price;” while centre-wise conspicuous and free to all, the sinner’s tree of life—the Lord and Saviour Christ—affords such shelter, sustenance and shade, that every time the child of God is led to “feed on him in his heart by faith with thanksgiving,” he can rejoicingly exclaim, “I sat under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was pleasant to my taste; he led me to his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.”

Let us now, under the Lord’s guidance, approach the text, and in our proposed exposition endeavour to justify the general remarks which have been made. It is unnecessary, brethren, to enter into the details of that solemn truth—the fall of man; they are familiar to every Bible reader; nevertheless, some remarks in immediate connexion with the fact are proper to my object.

Adam, in Paradise, created in the divine image, was endowed by his Maker with a *threefold* character, which he was called upon to sustain in holy obedience to Him whose law was life: in this complex official character, in which he was “a figure of Him that was to come,” he acted as *Prophet*, *Priest*, and *King*. As a Prophet, he was gifted with inspired wisdom—he was possessed of the knowledge of all the properties of the creature—capable of appreciating their excel-

lence, and understanding the laws of their being, and competent to judge of the harmony and adaptiveness of the curious, the costly, the minute, and magnificent objects with which the earth was furnished, and which spoke to his all-informed mind the power, wisdom, and love of Him whose word called them into being. As a Prophet, he walked daily with God, and daily read his lessons in the ample page of nature: as a Prophet, creation was to him one vast volume of truth—one mine of intellectual richness, which the deeper he explored the more did he discover; while, as a Priest, he consecrated in praise what he acquired in wisdom. As a Priest, creation was to him one vast temple—the earth one spacious altar, on which he heaped the incense of his holy thanksgivings. And lastly, as a King, he ruled the earth, as heaven’s delegate, invested with dominion over every living thing that moveth upon the face of the earth. In an evil hour he let go his hold upon eternal life, and bartered it for death—he threw away the blessedness of obedience, and incurred the penalties of transgression—he thought to be independent of God, and he became the slave of sin, and the servant of sorrow. That heart which was a well-spring of holiness unto the Lord, became a fountain of impurity; and having reproached his Maker with his own bounty, and turned his blessings into the excuse for disobedience, he was expelled from Paradise—the crown fallen from his brow—his robe of purity gone—poor and miserable, and blind and naked—debased in spirit—a homeless wanderer upon a world cursed for his transgression, which threw up beneath his advancing footsteps its briars and its thorns, in bitter emulation of the sins, cares, and sorrows, which were already thickening in the soil of his degenerate heart—and, “so He drove out the man.” Gladly would he have lingered within those holy retreats, where he had once walked in singleness of heart, as

unto the Lord, but it may not be ; personal communion with God cannot be where there is personal defilement by sin—happiness and sin must dwell apart, and where God vouchsafed the blessing of his presence, evil can no longer stay.—“ So He drove out the man.”

By that fall, in which he ruined himself, and which involved the ruin of his race, man has lost the wisdom of the prophet, the functions of the priest, and the supremacy of the king. Once enlightened by the pure and perfect wisdom from above—man, “ vain in his imaginations, having his understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in him, because of the blindness of his heart,”—once a minister of holy sacrifice, now imbued with rooted “ enmity against God,” “ unthankful, unholy,” and ministering in sensual sacrifice to the world, the devil, and the flesh,—once endowed with kingly exaltation, now a slave to his fellow, or a tyrant to himself, and fallen from that supremacy over nature and the elements, which God entrusted to him on the morning of his creation. Well, has the bitterness of his experience brought mankind back to Eden’s gate in penitence and tears? Far from it—“ the wicked in the pride of his countenance seeketh not after God, God is not in all his thoughts”—“ there is none that doeth good”—“ there is no fear of God before their eyes”—No, but conscious in some degree, perhaps instinctively, of all he lost, he has ever since been aiming at the restitution of his once exalted office—but in the spirit of the devil, and by the presumptuous exercise of his unhallowed intellect and his perverted powers. Still does he challenge to himself the wisdom of the *Prophet*; though all the accumulated learning, the vaunted philosophy, that ever shone the brightest in the heathen schools, was at best but splendid ignorance and ingenious folly, “ for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with

God :” and all that putting forth of scientific genius—its novel theories, and their grand results, is but the groping after that prophetic gift—the moving over the ruins of his early greatness—the putting forth his desperate endeavours to recover that first and lowest of his birthrights—the “ ever learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” The *Priestly office* he would also grasp, and, like *Cain*, he would present his proud thanksgiving as though he had never sinned, and his heart was clean, and he had a claim on God. All those unholy rites and superstitious offerings—all those impure inventions, and those vain oblations, which turn the truth of God into a lie, and which man would offer on an altar of his own erection, and thereby fit himself to approach his God, are but the laying his unhallowed hands on that which He alone can claim—“ our great High Priest, who hath passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God.” *Dominion*, too, his unsanctified ambition thirsts for: hence the cruelty and oppressions, the slavery and despotism, the crime and bloodshed, which have tracked his footsteps since the fall—“ destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace they have not known.”

Thus, brethren, original transgression, like a germinating seed, has ripened into wide-spread and abounding iniquity—has sent up harvest after harvest of guilty terrors, blind incredulity, senseless superstition, desolating oppression, and bitter woes—has filled the earth with its long train of weeping families, and marred and broken companionships, and blighted hopes and blasted joys, till it has turned the world into one wide all-comprehending tomb, gathering generation after generation within its capacious chambers, and consigning indiscriminately both young and old to the darkness and corruption of the curse.

Oh! and what a *value* there must be

in *that offering* which could shield such a world from the consuming judgments of a holy God! When I think what wilful blasphemy, what premeditated iniquity, what systematic inapurity proceeds daily and nightly under the eye of heaven, and that it has ever been so since the fall; it would almost stagger me in my faith that there is a God in heaven "whose eyelids try the children of men," did I not know and believe the infinite preciousness of that most holy sacrifice of Christ, which was accepted from the foundation of the world. And what a blessed prospect opens on us through this avenue in the very face of a world's abominations—that this deluge of sin shall at length subside—that the slimy path of the serpent shall at length be cleansed out of all nations—that the alloy of hell shall at length be burnt out of the elements of this solid globe—and that the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ. Blessed and most hopeful expectation!—that this renovated earth, peopled with the bodies and souls of the redeemed of God, shall be presented before the Father with exceeding joy—shall be given up to the Father as a pure and holy oblation—and remain for ever the most glorious monument of his almighty power to save, according as he hath declared—"Behold I create all things new."

"He drove out the man"—but he drove him out *in hope*. He drove him, doubtless, from the garden to the wilderness; but if he did so, he drove him from the garden to the *Cross*—from Paradise to *Calvary*—from the curse to the promise—from the abode of righteousness to the blood of the atonement—from the presence of the Father to the mediation of the Son—from the corruptions of the fall to the renewings of the Holy Ghost: "*So He drove out the man.*"

He had the promise of God to cheer him in his banishment, and the *mystical mercy-seat* at the gate of Eden at which to plead the promise; for "He placed

at the east of the garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword, which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Now observe the word *cherub* is compounded of the particle *che*, signifying *as*; and the noun *rub* signifying majesty; *im*, a plural termination: the word therefore, as it stands, conveys this idea—"the *similitude of the majesties*:" and a very general conclusion to which Biblical critics have come is, that the cherubim symbolized the Blessed and Holy Trinity, with the manhood of the Saviour taken in. Indeed the whole passage admits of this more significant version—"He set *in a tabernacle*, at the east of the garden of Eden, the cherubim with a flame of fire, turning *on itself*, to preserve the way of the tree of life!" Therefore was it a standing symbol of the covenant of redemption entered into from the creation of the world, by Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to regain Paradise, and restore his dwelling-place to man. It was set up in a tabernacle to teach the precious truth, that God would indeed dwell with men; first in his humiliation, as Emmanuel, "God with us;" and finally, at his second coming in majesty and glory, when "the Tabernacle of God shall be with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God." The flame turned inwardly upon itself, and thus represented the averted justice of the Father sheathing itself in the bosom of the Son; and what said it?—"Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts." And this was done "to preserve the way of the tree of life;" not hopelessly to exclude man, but in the full assurance of hope, to present Christ as the "way" without deviation, "truth" without a cloud, and "life" without end—as "the restorer of paths to dwell in," and the covenant guardian of "the paradise of God." (Rev. ii. 7.)

Here, brethren, before the *mercy seat*,



at the gate of Eden, we may imagine our first parents, daily to plead the promise—daily to sacrifice the lamb, with penitence and tears: here too, Abel's offering of faith was accepted; and from this presence it was, that Cain was driven out for despising the blood of atonement, and shedding the blood of a brother. The mercy seat with its incumbent Shechinah subsequently tabernacled among the seed of Abraham—in their wilderness marches, at once their glory and defence; again it filled the temple of Solomon with the splendors of its presence, till eventually, when the fulness of the time had come, “the Word was made flesh, and *tabernacled* amongst us; and we beheld *his glory*—the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth”—“whom God hath set forth to be the *Mercy Seat* for our sins;” for God hath made Him to be the *Sin-offering* for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” And now there is provided full pardon of sin; for “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin:” there is a robe of righteousness wherewith to clothe us, for Christ magnified the law and made it honorable, and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be by the law of Moses; and shall be presented “without spot or blemish”—faultless and perfect in Him before the Father with exceeding joy. There is sanctification of heart, for “a new heart and a right spirit will I give them,” is the gracious promise—and “I will put my Spirit within them, and cause them to walk in my statutes,” and then glory to crown all, for whom he justifies them He glorifies, and the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon them, and “when He who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.” Thus is God the just God, and yet the justifier of the ungodly that believe in Christ Jesus—thus is He “glorious in holiness,” yet “rich in mercy”—thus, though the

law of justice hath written us—‘children of wrath,’ “having no hope and without God in the world;” the superscription of the law of grace, aye, and written in the Saviour's blood is—“children of God,” “joint heirs with Christ,” and “temples of the Holy Ghost.” “But now in Jesus,” says St. Paul, “ye who were sometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.” Behold our expulsion—“afar off” by justice: behold our restoration—“made nigh,” by grace! This is God's own work—to bring the “far off”—“nigh;” no power short of that which called forth Lazarus from the grave, could bring the ‘far off’ nigh, or raise the spiritually dead, to life; the human hand may roll away the stone; the ministry of man may pour a stream of light into the dwelling place of death; but if not followed by the inward call of Christ—the inward demonstration of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, he stirs not. It is God's prerogative, for, after all, it is God alone who can drive out the *old man*, and God alone who can implant the *new*.

And now, brethren, blessed be his name, he is exalted to the right hand of God—a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins through faith in his name—our great High Priest, charged with innumerable blessings for the children of adoption—the great bond of union between heaven and earth. Like a golden cord let down from the sanctuary above, among the sinful men that are below; with every sinner that by faith lays hold on him, he proves the bright conductor along which the peace of heaven and the holiness of heaven descends into the heart. He saves with a thorough salvation—“to the uttermost.” He saves not only from the judgment of the law upon sin, but from the power of sin upon the heart. He “*forgiveth* all our iniquities;” he “*healeth* all our diseases.” He came not only to throw the robe of his unsullied righteousness over our uncleanness and infirmity; but, like the good



Samaritan, to probe, that he might heal—to bind up our wounds—to pour in the oil and wine of heavenly strength and heavenly consolation. Yes, and he has won back all we lost: the earnest, now; the full possession and reinvestment when “He cometh to judge the world in righteousness, and to be the glory of his people Israel.” *The lost image of God*—He restores it by “renewing us in the spirit of our minds,” and causing us to “put on the *new man* which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” *A forfeited immortality*—it is recovered—“for this is *life eternal* to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent,” and “when Christ who is *our life* shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.” *A home of peace and blessedness*—this also is secured—“wait on the Lord and keep his way, and He shall exalt thee to *inherit the land*; when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it”—“He will beautify the meek with salvation,” and “the meek shall inherit the earth.” Observe also how the children of God are, by virtue of their adoption in Christ, reconsecrated to the office and calling of a *royal priesthood*: thus the apostle Peter says—“Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people.” When Moses ordained Aaron and his sons to the office of the Levitical priesthood, he acted in the name of his heavenly Master, and a mediator of the covenant then being; and as such (Exodus xxix.) he brought them to the door of the tabernacle, he washed their bodies with pure water, he led them to confess their sins over the head of the sin offering, he applied the blood of the burnt offering to the right ear, the right hand, and the right foot, to denote the appropriation of their best energies to God, and he sprinkled their garments with oil mingled with blood from the altar. Now, if *Moses*, a mediator of the old covenant, washed their bodies with water, *Christ*, as the me-

diator of the new, “loved the church and gave himself for it that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word”—“The washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.” If they made confession of sin on the head of the burnt offering, “God hath made him to be the sin offering for us”—and “he that confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall find mercy.” If they were devoted by the application of blood, “we are not our own, we are bought with a price”—the precious blood of Christ “as of a lamb without spot or blemish”—wherefore should we “glorify God in our bodies and our spirits which are his.” If they were sprinkled with the oil and blood, we are addressed as “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Christ”—and “we have an unction from the Holy One.” If they, thus consecrated, were admitted to the ministrations of the tabernacle service, we, thus consecrated, are invited to “draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.” They daily ministered at the altar, and washed at the laver before entering the tabernacle sanctuary—daily must we plead the sacrifice, daily must we wash at the fountain in our approaches to the throne of grace—daily must we look to the cross—daily must we seek for the Spirit—the one as the ground of our confidence, the warrant of our hope, and the sign of our admission: the other as the inward witness of our acceptance, the quickening parent of holy fruitfulness and the sweet earnest of heavenly joys. They beheld their threefold calling in the sanctuary—to the *world*—the *church*—the *Lord*: we are called on to “let our *light* shine before men, that they may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven;” “but to do good and to *communicate*, forget not, for with

such sacrifices God is well pleased;" and by "Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of *praise* to God continually." Thus consecrated as the royal priesthood of God, by the spirit, water, and the blood, we fulfil an high and holy office, by shining as lights in the world, and holding forth the word of life—by bearing one another's burdens, resting on one another, yet all resting on Christ—and by the unceasing ascription of praise to the God of our salvation, "not only with our lips but in our lives"—as *prophets*, taught by His Spirit and guided into all truth—as *kings*, mortifying corrupt affections, subduing sinful desires, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; and as *priests*, consecrating our prophetic gifts and our kingly conquests unto God. Thus, my brethren, should we live, as prophets growing in wisdom, as kings enlarging our conquests, and as priests augmenting our daily sacrifice! This is indeed, *to live*—this is to walk with God—this is to be exalted to sit in heavenly places—to have our conversation in heaven—our fellowship with the white-robed, palm-sceptred and crowned elders before the throne above! This is in fine, "to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and to be filled with all the fulness of God!"

Oh! the love of Christ! the restoring, sustaining, cherishing, sanctifying love of

Christ! it is the life of the soul—it is the coal of living fire which kindles on the altar of the heart the sacrifice of the affections—it is the substance of all joy—the wellspring of all holiness—the fountain of all benevolence! it lifts the soul above the billows of this stormy existence into the pure sunshine and peaceful calm of heaven, and flings a brightness over the most perplexing and desolating dispensations. Like *Paul* at Philippi, it calls forth thanksgiving in the very midnight of its tribulations—like the *Macedonian Church*, the "*abundance of its joy*," though coupled with "*deep poverty*," abounds unto the "*riches of its liberality*." Touch but the heart with the love of Christ, and selfishness retreats before its influence; captious objection and sordid calculation fly before it. Touch but the heart with the love of Christ, and a chord is struck which vibrates ever to the call of mercy and to the cry of destitution. These are times when the necessity of acting up to our profession as Christians in all matters, is peculiarly called for; but particularly in the matter of Bible instruction: they are trimming times; and if we truly believe the whole Bible as a basis of national education, to be essential to the production of that righteousness that exalteth a nation: now is the time to prove our professions, and testify to their sincerity by conformable practice.

## MORTALITY AND IMMORTALITY.

1

There is a sound of passing fear, that comes with chilling pow'r  
On sinning, unregenerate man—as mildew on the flow'r,—  
That steals unbidden on his mirth, like the dread midnight cry  
“The Bridegroom comes, go meet thy God!”—THE THOUGHT  
THAT MAN MUST DIE.

2

How is all human pride brought low by such a truth as this!  
How does it mock all worldly joy, and “that sole earthly bliss  
That still survives the fall of man”—that pearl within the heart—  
For earthly links must be dissolv'd, and friend from friend  
depart.

3

And we must tread this vale of tears in solitude and gloom,—  
Yet what is that which we call life?—a journey to the tomb.  
And what is death? the path to life; since that alone can give  
Emanicipation to the soul,—for know, that MAN MUST LIVE!

4

Oh! if the sound of DEATH can wake the slumb'ring sinner's fear,  
How should the thought of endless LIFE sound in his frightened ear!  
For life without the God of life, is one of deep despair,  
Where hope may never cast a beam upon the darkness there.

5

But there's a word beyond compare, that decks the sacred page,  
Which smiles on cradled infancy, and guards unfriended age,  
That springs from Heav'n's all sacred fount, and falls upon the earth  
Like dew upon the wither'd grass, to give it second birth;

6

'Tis LOVE—divine, eternal love—that attribute of light—  
The theme of Heav'n's bright Seraphim, who, in Jehovah's sight  
Sing endless praises to the Lamb who left His throne above  
To ransom man from sin and death, and prove his boundless love.

7

What are your earth-born hopes?—false lights that burn but to  
betray,—  
Short-lived delusions—that must flit, like morning dream away,  
Soon as eternity has dawn'd upon the worldling's sight—  
Showing the past—one cheerless void; the future—endless night!

8

But, child of God! death is to thee the prelude to repose  
That ends thy pilgrimage, and stills life's ebbing tide of woes,  
The Portal to “thy Father's Halls”—thy long sought happy home  
Where hope can frame no higher bliss, and sorrow never come.

9

O God, Most High! who from the dust created living man,  
And suffer'd him to fall from Thee in thy mysterious plan;  
That by one wondrous act of grace on Calvary's cursed tree,  
Sin's penalty might be stoned, and man brought back to Thee,—

10

Hear thou from Heaven! protect and bless each erring child of clay;  
Save us from sin, and lead our steps into “the narrow way;”  
Teach us to know Thee—God of love!—our Father—Saviour—  
Friend—  
That we may love Thee, and be found in faith unto the end!

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OR

## GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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REV. W. A. BUTLER,

REV. C. SEYMOUR.

OCCASIONAL MYSTERIOUSNESS OF CHRIST'S TEACHING—CHRIST OUR “ LIFE.”

### A SERMON,

PREACHED IN ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH, DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY, 30TH JUNE, 1839.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM ARCHER BUTLER, A.M.

Rector of Clondehorka, and Professor of Moral Philosophy, T. C. D.

JOHN, viii. 51.

“ Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.”

I. THE Scriptures of God, my Brethren, are not to be practically interpreted without the *Spirit* of God. It is perfectly true that much may be done in the field of critical argument and exposition without any supernatural aid. It is quite certain, that a vast and elaborate commentary upon these Scriptures may be written, and read, and understood, without the influence of the Holy Spirit. It is supposable that a man may declaim with an overwhelming energy, and a force of genius altogether astonishing, upon the majestic mysteries of God's providence and grace;—that he may have power to arouse feelings, whether of tenderness or terror, that long lay slumbering in the lowest depths of the natural human heart, and with a potency like the fabled miracles of magic, to call them out at his bidding;—and yet that neither he, nor any one of his audience, have ever known, in any sense that

shall tell to their *eventual* salvation, one breath of the effectual Spirit of God, one pulsation of the genuine Spiritual life! There is absolutely nothing to prevent the intellect from exercising itself upon the Christian Revelation, more than upon the contents of any other printed book; or the reason from estimating it, or the imagination from building on it, or even the gentler affections from softening at its details. It is thrown in the midst of the world exactly like any other volume around it,—printed with the same types, read with the same eyes, heard with the same ears;—and the faculties and feelings of man will of course act upon it as they do upon any other history. But (if the Book itself may be allowed to declare its own claims and prerogatives,) all this external similarity is accompanied with a total internal difference; and this book differs from every other, in requiring—so



to speak—an organ specially prepared, to receive its real purport. These things are “*spiritually* discerned.”

And yet, while we uphold this awful distinction, we must balance the account by *another* principle, which seems intimated with equal clearness, and which, I believe, it would be fatal to all right views of religion to overlook. The change which takes place in each individual soul under the mysterious agency of the Spirit, is vast, but it is not unlimited. Whatever real fanaticism, (in some ages of the church,) or unintentional but injudicious exaggeration, may have urged,—it does not appear that the office of the Spirit of God is to supply us with affections in themselves substantially new,—to bestow a something which is neither Love, nor Fear, nor Hope, nor Desire,—but simply to direct the old affections to higher objects, to employ the former mechanism for more exalted purposes. The whole array of the human affections, under their old names and in their old characters, are brought out in strong relief in every page of Scripture; the object of the apostolic preaching, and teaching, and warning, and example, is manifestly not to annihilate, but to “direct, sanctify, and govern them,” upon better principles and under higher guidance. But we have spoken of a great and necessary *change*: with these elements preserved unaltered, where, then, is the scene of the work of the Spirit? where is the field on which this mighty revolution is wrought? Unquestionably, in the *object* revealed, and in the corresponding *attraction of the heart* to that object. He who is supernaturally gifted sees not with other eyes, but he sees what other eyes cannot see, and loves what other hearts cannot love! When the first martyr, “full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven,” his visual organ was itself, doubtless, unchanged; but while others looked upon the common skies, and saw but clouds or sunshine, he alone “saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.” Head and heart, the re-

generate is still the same *man*; but in a new world of bright and eternal realities:—and though “every thought,”—his whole intellectual organ—remains un mutilated, yet every thought is “brought captive to the obedience of Christ.” Thus God conciliates his worlds of nature and grace, and evinces that nothing was made in vain. *Sin* itself is an element in discipline; and as for the affections enthralled by its despotism, they are sinful not in themselves as affections, but in their depravation; they are meant to be not the bond slaves of evil, but the liberated “servants of righteousness;” they are born for eternity and for God!

Let us then, ever maintain for the Spirit of Truth—and more than ever in these days, in which we are wont to hear the gravest truths of revelation questioned, or diluted, or overlooked—His Own unparticipated right to illumine man;—not indeed by making man no longer man, but by feeding the affections with holy food, by inviting them to holy objects. In this work he is alone. “It is the Spirit that quickeneth.” The old and the new creation are alike exclusively divine. The Revelation of God itself, as delivered in books, dare not dispute this honour with the Everlasting Spirit. That revelation is written in a language familiar to our daily thoughts and converse; it speaks of Life, and Death, and Faith, and Hope, and Love,—all household words which in their earthly acceptation every man can speak of and define:—but to *pass* from the earthly term to the heavenly purport—from the natural object to the supernatural—from the “Life” of the flesh to the life of the Spirit—from the “Faith” which trusts in the brother-man to the faith which trusts in the “First-born among many brethren”—from the Love and Hope that are entangled among creatures of clay to the Love and Hope that are busy among the immortal realities of heaven—THIS is an art which the Spirit that inspired the Scriptures *alone* can teach to the man who reads them!

Reflections of this kind, my beloved

Brethren, are naturally prompted by the passage before us, taken in connection with the singular dialogue of which it is a part. They are among the first which will occur to meditative students of our Lord's habitual teaching; (in which there was at all times a striking similarity of style and method)—but perhaps on no occasion does this profound lesson of the necessity of spiritual enlightenment meet us more forcibly than upon the perusal of this remarkable discussion, recorded in the eighth chapter of St. John.

The Divine Instructor is in the midst of his Jewish audience. They surround him, half awed by his dignity, half provoked by his calmness. Undisturbed, and as if he felt himself more truly addressing ages to come—as if he stood in the presence, not of a few contentious disputants, but of the Church he was to found, and to redeem,—yea, as if he spoke in the presence of “an innumerable company of angels” and the “spirits of the just,” whom He was to “perfect,”—in such a tone as this he replies to their cavils. His words, while they sufficiently answer the objections of his adversaries, yet answer them *upon principles which they cannot yet comprehend*; and though these weighty sentences seem at first sight designed for present and immediate use, they are now known to be really pregnant with the deepest mysteries of the spiritual life, and only to be understood by those who have had *experience* in that life. Christ spoke to futurity, and presupposed a spiritual illumination not yet bestowed. He would evince the necessity of a divine interpreter to unfold and explain his own words; and *therefore* he speaks—truths indeed, but truths whose deep purport he knew those whom he addressed were wholly unable to penetrate. *What* are the topics of this solemn discourse? “Truth”—“freedom”—“life”—“death:”—all intelligible terms, surely; but, in their spiritual import, to the unspiritualized mind, dark as the counsels of God, fathomless as eternity!

Two important uses can be made of this peculiarity in our Lord's method of address, combined with this view of its object. The first we have in some measure seen. Such a discourse as that to which I am calling your attention, shows us Christ himself proceeding on the necessity of the supernatural illumination he was afterwards to bestow. He speaks as it were in *cypher*; the Spirit of God is to furnish the solution. He teaches, then, by *example*, no less than precept, that that Spirit alone can unfold the things of the Spirit: his very *obscurity* to the audience who heard him is a perpetual assumption of the principle. To the Christian Believer, therefore, the adoring contemplation of such a discourse suggests something over and above the purport of each separate passage. It urges him to pray for a lamp of heavenly light to read it by! It bids him not be content, in this or any other portion of Scripture, with words; but to covet earnestly to be familiar with *things*—truths—realities. It impresses the lesson so perpetually forgotten, that as in all subjects we can understand language only as far as we have some *experience* of the things it imports; so in religion (by the very same principle) the spiritual heart alone can understand the language of the Spirit. Think of it for a moment, and you will find that in every book whatever, it is the mind of the reader that puts meaning in the words; the language of the new covenant is a celestial language, and they who will give their fulness to *its* blessed words must have caught their secret from heaven! But again,—

To the *Infidel* impugner of Christianity, this view of the special *design* of the apparent obscurity of discourses such as this, and the refusal of our Lord to descend from his own lofty strain in order to meet on a lower ground the ignorance of his assailants,—obviously resists a popular objection to his method of instruction. But it does more than this. Let us but suppose that St. John has *truly*

reported the discussion before us. What then are the facts? Language is here employed unintelligible to the unenlightened Jew, in effect unprofitable, as far as we can see, for any *immediate* purpose; certainly little calculated to conciliate temporary popularity: yet this very language, which then dropped from those divine lips, neglected or despised, except by a few humble followers, becomes afterwards treasured, published, known universally, and, even by those who partially disregard it, admitted to be stamped with the impress of a great and exalted mind. *Who*, then, was this Being, that thus, wandering among the suburbs of Jerusalem, could afford to lose the present in the future? and not this only, but to count upon a future which so perfectly realized his calculation? Does not the whole strain of the discourse evince the calm prescience of one who was familiar with the secrets of time to come, who knew that he *would* be, though he was *not yet*, appreciated; and is not, therefore, the very obscurity, and the very reserve, which the assailant of the divine mission of Christ offers as an objection, itself, as facts and history have now established, an inward indication of a knowledge supernatural and divine?

So far, brethren, we have spoken of the general character of this momentous discourse, which, as the most prominent instance of our Lord's mode of meeting his adversaries, deserves deep and patient study. We have seen, that he speaks a mysterious language of which he declines to offer any immediate explanation. We have seen a strong reason for his adoption of this course—to impress the paramount necessity of spiritual enlightenment; and we have seen how forcibly this seeming neglect of the perverted and petulant Jew that heard him, for the higher interests of the church that was to succeed his ascension, demonstrated his inward knowledge of futurity.

II. Let us now, for a while, rest upon *one* of those many mysterious phrases of the discourse, the expression recorded in the

text—"If a man keep my saying, *he shall never see death.*" You cannot fail to remember how fatally the Jews misunderstood this mighty declaration, in imagining that our Lord promised to his followers the doubtful blessing of an earthly immortality; and how they objected to him the death of their greatest ancestor, as a sufficient evidence of the supposed arrogance of him who offered to give that which Abraham could not keep.

That there is an inseparable connexion between "Christ" and "Life" no student of the New Testament can overlook. "*The Life* was manifested," says St. John, in his first epistle, "and we have seen it." The Life thus "manifested," was, doubtless Christ Himself, conformably to the same Evangelist's record of his divine Master's proclamation, that He was "*the resurrection and the life*," "*the way, the truth, and the life*." Christ is "*the life*," plainly because—by what process I do not now inquire—the *cause* of life, as he is said to be our "*peace*" and our "*sanctification*," because he is the source of these blessings; or as dying Simeon, in his parting hymn, designates him the "*Salvation*" of which he was the Author and Securer. The purport of the expression, (as attributing to Christ the production of life,) is more directly given in that title which St. Peter employed in the third of Acts—"Ye killed the Prince, (Author, Leader,) of life"—a form of phrase evidently intended to heighten the atrocity of the act by the force of the *contrast*.

So far there can be little doubt, or difference of opinion. But when, from the mere fact of the intimate *connexion* of the Lord of life, and the life he bestows, we advance to estimate more precisely the nature or extent of this "*life*," we find among those who undertake to speak of these matters, much uncertainty and variance. (1) Some will tell you that the phrase ascribes to Christ the power of immortalizing human souls; (2) others, in a higher and truer strain, that it attributes to Him the *spiritual* resurrection from the death

of sin, which takes place in every regenerated soul; (3) others again, that it pronounces Him the author and bestower of an eternity, not merely of existence, but of *happiness* in heaven. These are indeed mighty gifts; they all alike pre-suppose a power nothing below divine; for if *creation* be divine, the re-creation, whether to *existence*, to *righteousness*, or to *bliss*, of God's noblest earthly creature, surely partakes of the same supreme character of power. But nobler still it is to look upon them *all* as issuing from *the same* eternal Fountain. Here then is the solution of the difficulty. These opinions are separately true, but separately imperfect: the Messiah unites in himself all these offices—offices themselves essentially connected with him and with each other!

1. 2. "In Christ all shall be made alive"—but that the depth and extent of the Scriptural term "life" can never be limited to the mere revival of the soul from death or unconsciousness, seems obvious on the most cursory inspection of the sacred volume. So far is mere immortality from answering to this gift of Life, that there is a species of immortality to which the title of *death*—"eternal death," and "the second death," is Scripturally given. Accordingly Christ himself expressly terms the passage to the future state of glory, the "resurrection of *life*" in contrast to "the resurrection of *damnation*," (John v. 20,) and he is said to have brought not merely "immortality," but "life and immortality," to light. The same St. Paul who assigns him this high office, declares that the Gospel promises to those who seek "honour, and glory, and immortality"—eternal life, evidently considering that this eternal life *involves them all*; for surely the prize (in a land whose blessedness "the heart of man" is declared unable to conceive) will not be inferior to the aim which its votaries can here propose to their conceptions. It appears hence that this "life," as well as the "death" spoken of in the text, is essentially a *moral*, not a merely physical,

state or notion; that it is a blessed and spiritual vitality. To express his highest spiritual bestowments no term is more frequently employed by our blessed Lord than "light"—now this light is itself perpetually connected with his descriptions or intimations of the *life* he was to bestow, and that in a manner which indissolubly combines the two. "My follower shall have the *light of life*," he declares to the Pharisees (John viii. 12); while "the shadow of death" is, as you know, the constant type of a state of hopeless spiritual ruin. It was to those who "lay in the shadow of *death*" that "the *Day Spring from on high* came to give *light*." And surely this use of "life" to express "blessedness" was, in the mouth of our Redeemer, perfectly natural. His very existence was one long impulse of holiness; to him to live was to live in holiness; and he naturally and habitually spoke of that eternal life with which alone he was familiar, as identical with eternal holiness. He borrowed his language from that celestial dialect, where there is but one term for existence, and that term is "glory!" When he promised life, he promised all that was unchangeably associated with it in *his own* divine experience. Nothing short of a transcendent and abiding exaltation of nature deserved the title of that *life* which he was to communicate to his followers.

The "life" then of which the New Testament reveals to us the story, is beyond and above the mere consciousness of existence, or its indefinite prolongation; "the water of life" which, as we are told, flows so liberally in the Paradise of God, is more than a physical elixir; the "fruit of the tree of life" is more than a physical sustenance. And in like manner, he who (as in the text) is promised security from "*death* for ever," is rescued from a fate far more terrible than annihilation; he is rescued from the miseries of death protracted into eternity!

2. 3. We cannot, then, have much embarrassment in setting aside this undue limita-



tion of the "eternal life," which Christ has purchased for his followers. But greater difficulty has sometimes been found in appropriating to their respective passages the other significations which I have mentioned—the spiritual life of holiness in the soul, and the eternal life of happiness hereafter. Of *both* these Christ is equally the author; and while we know that St. Paul found it necessary (2 Tim. ii. 18.) to repress a notion which, even in his days, had gained votaries, that the resurrection to life, of which the Redeemer had spoken was a purely spiritual exaltation of the soul, and, as such, accomplished in this world; perhaps *we* may sometimes be in danger of falling into the opposite extreme. The truth is that these things are essentially and for ever *united*—and this is the reason why the same phrase is employed to characterize them both. Let me ask you to consider this a little more deeply.

We know that even in the ordinary exercise of the moral faculty in men, there is usually included a consciousness of *desert*; and thence, in minds at all trained to carry out their own conceptions, a strong anticipation of some yet unrealized attestation of the ineffaceable distinctions of good and evil, in the form of recompense. We are not, therefore, to wonder, that, through almost every region of Heathenism, human nature bore and bears witness—faintly indeed but truly—to this mighty connection of the present with the future; and that some were even found among the unbaptized world who could boldly tell the servant of virtue, that though the reason of man had no hand to unweave the tangled web of Providence, it had an eye to look through it, and a voice to pronounce with infallible certainty—that the power that rules the universe, rules Himself, and it by the immutable Law of Right. Now Christianity is the Law of Right in its fullest action; and with a clear and constant apprehension of the true character of God as proclaimed in Revelation, such anticipations of the future development of his government cannot but

brighten into a *belief*, that becomes indisso-lubly *associated with* a course of earnest virtue—cannot but, by the inevitable operation of habitual reflection, be so bound up with it as to become a part of its very idea—so that the service here and the glory hereafter become perpetual companions in the thoughts, each supposing and demanding the other. And if this be so, which all experience confirms, surely it is not difficult to conceive, that the child of God may so feel his future inheritance *realized* in his present graces, as at length to identify them in conception and in name; the preparatory life of this world, and the consummate life of the next, being the two inseparable elements—mutually inclusive—of the office of the quickening Spirit in relation to the soul of man.

But this identification becomes infinitely more natural, when we reflect on the substantial sameness of the inward state in both these stages of being—a sameness of which this phrasology is at once the consequence and the proof. If that ineffable gift—Christ received into the heart of man by faith—be indeed a principle whose developments are to make the history of immortality, why *should* we disjoin the principle from its results? If it be indeed "a well of water *springing up* into everlasting *life*," why should we seek a separate title for the Fountain and the River, that, issuing from its silent depths, flows away into eternity? If it be a "seed" whose bloom is to be an amaranth—the immortal flower,—shall we not name it from its period of perfection, and love to lose the feeble present in the glories of the unfading future? And surely, could we look upon Death as Christians should look,—could we see it in a mysterious Baptism—an Infant Baptism of the "little children" of God—from the Church Suffering into the Church Triumphant, far less startling than that Baptism of old which was our mystic transit from the world into the suffering Church—it is with feelings and language such as I have described, that we would feel and speak of

that "Holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance," of that Spirit which already "bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs"—in short, of the substantial oneness of the spiritual life, from the first hour of the incorporation into Christ, wheresoever wrought, on unto very eternity!

Nay, I know not if even yet we have reached the deep truth of this matter. We all know how the Spiritual and the vitally Eternal are united in scripture phraseology, whenever it has occasion to speak of the "law of the *Spirit of life*," of that "Spirit" which "IS LIFE because of righteousness," of that "spiritual mindedness" which "IS LIFE" as well as "peace." The more you rest upon these profound sayings, the more you will feel that they speak of some mystic intimacy of inward connexion, which answers to all that we can conceive of an absolute unity of nature; and that, had we faculties to see these things, we might perceive that a *deathless* permanence belongs to the Spiritual Thing inherent in the regenerate mind—if it indeed evidence its genuineness by there through earthly life abiding and fructifying,—in virtue of a natural necessity as real as that which perpetuates any of the unalterable laws and relations which reason apprehends in the universe of God. The spiritual is essentially eternal. In the theory of christianity, (if I may use that formal name for the glimpses which we gain in the New Testament of the mighty mysteries of God) they are not two Ideas, but two aspects of one and the same Idea; and they are thence used so as to imply each other. "Whoso drinketh my blood and eateth my flesh *hath* eternal life, and I," who thus abide in him, "will raise him up;" he hath within him the Principle which will afterwards manifest itself (as in a natural reappearance,) in glory. "Hethat believeth in me *hath passed* from death unto life;" "he that hath the Son, *hath life*." Christ, then, and his sacred interpreters,

seem to have intimated that in sanctity there is *essentially* comprised a germ of immortality; that holiness is so far necessarily connected with that universal scheme of perfection of which it is a part, as to partake of its inherent eternity, and inherent happiness, of nature. Feeling thus, they could regard the indwelling of Christ's eternal Spirit *now*, to be not so much (one might say) the condition, as the first stage of glory;—and thence, to speak of the "life" bestowed by Christ in inward holiness in time, and the "life" bestowed by Christ in perfect happiness in eternity, was not to speak of two lives, but of two forms of one incorruptible, uninterrupted, unchangeable Gift of Everlasting Life.

Such views as these, then, (which if I were not afraid of taxing your attention unduly, might be carried much farther,) seem to show how closely connected are the three forms of Life—physical, spiritual, and eternal—of which "Christ who is our Life," is the Almighty Author. The more you reflect upon this mighty theme, the more you will see that his office, instead of being limited to any, grasps them all;—that he must raise the dead as Judge and Saviour, that he may punish and that he may save; that he bestows a quickening principle of *spiritual* life upon the soul, which must pass the grave, for nothing holy can perish, it "partakes of the Divine nature," it is "incorruptible seed," and *must* flower in paradise;—finally, that of this last consummate state, he is also Lord and Donor, and in love shall rejoice as he beholds the *same* light which once was dawn, hereafter settling in that noon which knows no sunset!

Of this Life Divine, it is but to be said, that it is traceable to an unfathomable fountain in the infinite essence of God the Father: "the Father hath life *in himself*." From Him it is declared to be received by his Son, yet received with a certain mystic independency; "even so hath he *given* to the Son to have life *in himself*:" and from Him it flows abroad

upon mankind, according to the inscrutable laws of the Divine purpose;—"even so the *Son* maketh alive whom he will,"—"as I live by the Father, so he that eateth me shall live *by me*,"—"because *I live* ye shall live also;" a purpose of which we only know that it directs itself by the practical belief of the receiver—for "he that believeth" it is who "hath everlasting life," or as the text expresses it—"he that keepeth my saying shall never see death." Thus is every believing child of God—no matter in what earthly bondage groaning, in what earthly misery sunk—bound by a chain of adamant to the very throne of the ever blessed Trinity. There is that in him which hath its birth-place in the bosom of the "High and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity;" the life of Him who bids the universe live, is enshrined in his inmost spirit! "He shall never see death," for he is one with Him who cannot die! He has entered within the portals of glory—he has laid his hand upon the Ark of God. Dungeon may confine him—death may threaten him; but the dungeon-bolt cannot exclude the risen Saviour, and death itself is but the seal and passport of his immortality. Brethren! how is it that we awake not to these transcendent claims? How is it that, with such an image and superscription upon us, we can bear to mingle with the dull alloy of earth? How is it that, with all these awful assurances of the mighty thing the spirit of a man indeed is, when bound in everlasting unity with the Spirit of Christ, we can live unthoughtful of such an heritage,—as if *this* world with its melancholy mockery of hope and happiness, were meant to fill the heart that a God has once deigned to visit and to sanctify; or as if the curtain that hung upon the grave had never been indeed withdrawn by the triumphant Conqueror of sin and death!

"He that keepeth my saying shall never see death!" Many a dark century has passed away, since the walls of the

temple echoed these glorious words; words, one would deem, that, uttered from God to man, might well change the face of the world,—might arouse from one end of earth to the other, a high and holy ambition to join the bright band of immortals thus summoned to the courts of God's own palace by God's own voice! Oh, sad reverse of reality! The people of God—the keepers of the saying of Christ—far from filling all lands, and glorifying every clime, are a scattered race, often a destitute and persecuted race! Doubtless, our Faith is yet to hold the earth in fee; ultimately it shall take in the whole wide family of man;—but at the present period, and ever since its foundation, it is vain to deny that if "without holiness no man shall see the Lord," it has been as truly partial in its actual results upon the eternal state of mankind, as Judaism itself upon their temporal condition. Age after age, a few hundreds or thousands of cotemporary believers are collected into the treasure cities of immortal happiness, gathered from various spots in the wide Christian world;—and there the operation ceases! "Many are called," but it is still too melancholy a certainty, that "few are chosen." It is as if mankind formed a vast garden of diversified plants, out of which the great Florist selects here and there a few promising shoots upon which to exhaust all the resources of Divine art—to show how holy a thing human nature *may* be made, and to fit for transplanting into his own special conservatory. Into this awful mystery,—the most tremendous in all the Divine government—I dare not intrude. I tremble at my own insignificance when I stand before this cloud that covers the merey-seat of God! A voice from the sanctuary declares that "God is *Love*," and it is enough,—I believe the voice. I leave it to the secret alchymy of Divine Wisdom to convert evil into good,—and (as even in our own limited experience) out of destruction to bring forth life. But



while I leave, and would bid *you* leave, in faith to the Eternal Father, the dispositions of his own boundless empire, I cannot abandon the right, and high privilege of the minister, to summon all who hear me to ponder the practical instruction that this appalling mystery impresses. When the disciples once enquired "who then can be saved?" the answer was consolatory, that, "with God all things are possible." When, on another occasion, a similar question was proposed—"are there few that be saved?" the answer was severe, practical, and imperative—"strive to enter in at the narrow gate!" And such should be the mingled web of our conclusions on the subject;—a combination of confidence in the absolute goodness of God, and of earnest resolution to be warned by the terrors of his threats.

"He that keepeth my saying, shall never see death!" Mark, brethren! it is no *momentary* adoption of the faith and law of Christ to which eternal life is the promised recompense. It is no transient emotion of passionate grief—no occasional sympathy with martyred virtue—no evanescent enthusiasm in the cause of the Gospel—that forms in the heart of man the germ of future glory; it is "to keep the saying of Christ." Our Christianity is momentary, because its principle is momentary; we turn to religion to diversify our life, not to *be* our life. But, oh! as you would indeed be the sealed and reserved inheritors of glory, remember this—that God will not condescend to take his place among the fashions of the day! remember, that Christianity is not a new system of theological reasoning, nor a new assortment

of phraseology, nor a new circle of acquaintance, nor even a new line of meditation,—but a new *life*. Its very being and essence is inward and practical: it is not the likeness or the history of a living thing—it is itself alive! And therefore to examine its evidences is not to try Christianity; to admire its martyrs is not to try Christianity; to compare and estimate its teachers is not to try Christianity; to attend its rites and services with more than Mahometan punctuality, is not to try or know Christianity. But for one week—for one day—to have lived in the pure atmosphere of faith and love to God, of tenderness to man; to rejoice in the felt and realized presence of Him who is described as "coming up from the wilderness," supporting his beloved; to have beheld earth annihilated and heaven opened to the prophetic gaze of hope; to have seen evermore revealed behind the complicated troubles of this strange mysterious life, the unchanged smile of an eternal Friend,—and every thing that is difficult to reason, solved by that reposing trust which is higher and better than reason,—to have known and felt this—I will not say for a *life*, but for a single blessed hour—*that*, indeed, is to have made experiment of Christianity,—that is to know the imperishable work of the Spirit in preparing souls for eternity,—*that* is to "keep the saying" which shall keep from death,—*that* is to have a glimpse of the meaning of those mystic words which I will not dare to paraphrase or amplify, but which are in themselves all, and more than all, I have attempted to express—that "OUR LIFE IS HID WITH CHRIST IN GOD."



THE CHARACTER AND DUTIES OF THE MINISTRY.

## A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE CATHEDRAL OF DERRY, AT THE VISITATION OF THE  
UNITED DIOCESES OF DERRY AND RAPHOE,

ON JUNE 13, 1839.

BY THE REV. C. SEYMOUR, A.B.

Rector of Killea, and late Curate of Derry Cathedral.

*(Published at the request of the Bishop and several of the Clergy.)*

2 COR. vi 4.

“In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God.”

AN eminently holy and successful minister desired that this sentence might be written in his heart. As it obviously suggests the principal topics connected with the consideration of the Christian ministry—as it points to the office, as well as to the duties, to which we, my brethren, are called, it is selected as a motto for the reflections suitable to the present occasion. It is good in the midst of those public questions which are now agitated, involving the interests of religion in these countries—in the midst of the conflicts in which our church has of late years been embroiled—it is profitable to withdraw our minds for a season from these views which have a tendency to secularize them, and to consider our sacred office itself, with the due discharge of it, apart from the political circumstances with which it is so mixed up.

In directing the attention of my respected brethren to this great subject, there will be no attempt to offer any thing with which they are not thoroughly conversant, which they do not already know,

and in which, I trust, they are well established. I do not forget that I occupy this pulpit now, not as heretofore, to feed the flock entrusted to me, but to address my fellow-labourers on the subject of our common work in the Lord: not now aiming to instruct but to “stir up minds by way of remembrance;” and as it is found in Christian experience that true edification is promoted, not solely or chiefly by originality or novelty, but by the repetition and digestion of the old truth—so I trust that the end of our assembling will not be the less answered, though nothing new or original be offered. Ought not that end to be—the having of the momentous realities connected with our ministry so vividly presented to our minds, that we may be stirred up to greater encouragement and devotedness. May the Holy Spirit own the present weak instrumentality, by imparting to us at this time, realizing views of the ministry to which He has appointed us.

In treating the subject of the Christian ministry, two departments naturally occur

—the same as are found in the words quoted from the apostle Paul—"In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God." *The character of the ministry* is suggested thus—"The ministers of God." *The duties* are comprehended thus—"In all things approving ourselves"—and the mutual connection and dependence of both parts is seen when the whole sentence is read together—"In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God." He reminds of the dignity of the office, with a view of enforcing the duty—He points to the character of the ministry, as stimulating to a suitable and consistent discharge of the duty.

#### I. THE CHARACTER OF THE MINISTRY.

We learn the character of our ministry by remembering *the origin of its institution*. It is of Divine appointment. The disputes which have prevailed in the universal Church respecting the proper channels for conveying, and the legitimate mode of investing the office, are so far from weakening or obscuring the evidence of this truth, that they may be considered as establishing it—since all who differ on these points allow, that the Christian ministry is an ordinance of God, appointed for the improvement of mankind, of His devising, and supported by His authority—an ordinance distinguished from the Pagan priesthood, in that it is not appointed for the performance of ceremonies, but for the inculcation of truth, not to conduct the pomp of showy unmeaning observances, but to watch for souls, as those that must give account. This ordinance is peculiar to Christianity. Its institution is traced to the mediation of the Son of God. It is one of the gifts which he received for his church, as the reward of his suffering unto death, and which he communicated upon his ascension—"wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men; and he gave some apostles, some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the

work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." It is thus the gift of the Son: so is its fountain also God the Father—"all things are of God, who hath given unto us the ministry of reconciliation;" yea it is moreover emphatically "the ministration of the Spirit." It is the great instrumentality employed by the Spirit in his operations on the souls of men. It is his authority, that calls to the work—as we have testified, when at ordination we solemnly avowed our trust, that we were "moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon us this office and ministration." It is His guidance also that directs in it, and His influence that bestows the needful supply of gifts and graces: so awful is the sanction—infinately above all human authority, which is stamped upon the sacred office.

The character of the ministry which we fulfil, is also ascertained by considering the *end of its institution*. If, in examining the origin of our office, we have traced it beyond all measurement, even to the footstool of the Eternal Trinity, so in tracing the end of its institution we shall climb to other heights of infinity—for the end of the Christian ministry, is found in eternity itself. It is conversant with the interests, and entrusted with the charge of immortal souls. It is the chief instrument for the renovation of the world, and the building up of the Church. Its design is, to recover man to his original purity and happiness, to enlighten his understanding, to communicate such truth, and to generate such principles, as will bring forth fruit unto everlasting life. It is the instrument, whereby that mysterious process is conducted by which men are converted unto God, and by which the work of progressive sanctification is carried on, "till we all come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." It deals with men. We are sent to man—the sinner—not the partial, but the total sinner—not the impoverished, but the ruined—not to man hurt by

sin, but to man dead in sin—not man to be repaired, but to be made—not to be rectified, but to be created. That workmanship which is disfigured and ruined by sin, it is ours to be employed for its recovery and renewal: that understanding which is blinded by the god of this world, and is turned from its noblest exercise, our ministry is for enlightening: those passions which are defiled and in the bondage of corruption, the sacred office is appointed to rectify, “telling the prisoners to go forth, to them that are in darkness, show yourselves,” and more, the conscience that testifies of guilt, and is filled with fear, is thus to be directed to the blood of the atonement—“the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world,” and all this with a view to eternity—looking to man’s eternal happiness, which consists in the exercise of all those restored powers of mind and soul, which are imparted by the Spirit, through the ministry. How poor, how empty, is every other pursuit compared with his! “The end of all things is at hand”—the materials, the instruments and the objects of every earthly pursuit will alike perish—religion, the renewed mind, is the only work that remains unto glory—this is the mystic enclosure rescued from the empire of change and death—this is the field which the Lord has blessed; and the word of the Gospel which we minister, is the seed which alone produces immortal fruit—the very bread of life with which the Lamb in the midst of the throne will feed and replenish his people throughout eternal ages. So glorious, so solemnly responsible is that function with which Christian ministers are invested.

II. The DUTIES connected with our office forms the second branch of the subject. The holy Scriptures exalt the Christian ministry, not to excite vanity which feeds even upon sacred things, or to promote self-exalting—but to awaken responsibility—to “stir up the gift that is in us,” that we apply ourselves to our work with becoming resolution, and anticipate, in de-

pendence on the divine blessing, important results, as it is well expressed—‘The moment we think lightly of the Christian ministry, our right arm is withered.’ Bishop Burnet refers to a counsel given him at the commencement of his ministry—to the effect, “that the argument in favour of the church, however clearly made out, would never have its full effect upon the world, till we could show a primitive spirit in our administration, as well as a primitive pattern for our constitution.” “This advice,” he adds, “made even then a deep impression on me, and I thank God the sense of it has never left me in the whole course of my studies.” And again, “Let the clergy live and labour well, and they will feel as much authority follow as they will know how to manage well; they will never be secured or recovered from contempt but by living and labouring as they ought.” In a reference to the duties belonging to the office of a minister, personal holiness claims the first place. This is the position given to it in the best of all descriptions of ministerial duty—Paul’s Epistle to Timothy—“Take heed unto thyself and to the doctrine.” “Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” So the great Head of the church himself makes it one of the great points of intercession for his apostles—“Sanctify them through thy truth”—the practice of the priests under the law showed this, who offered *first* for their own cleansing, and then for the people’s. Instead of satisfying ourselves in the acquisition of holiness with the attainments of a learner, we must aspire to the perfection of a master, and give to our life the correctness of a pattern. We, brethren, are called to such a conquest over the world, and such an exhibition of the Spirit of Christ, as shall not merely exempt us from censure, but excite to emulation. As those to whom the conduct of souls is committed we cannot make a wrong step without endangering the interests of others, ‘ours is

the misconduct of the pilot who is denied the privilege of perishing alone.' Bishop Taylor's views on this subject are strikingly put—"You may be innocent, and yet not zealous of good works; you must be excellent, not *tanquam unus de populo*, but *tanquam homo Dei*—not after the common manner of men, but after God's own heart—not only pure but shining—not only blameless, but didactic in your lives; that as by your sermons you preach in season, so by your lives you may preach out of season—that is, at all seasons and to all men, that they seeing your good works may glorify God on your behalf, and on their own." If we consider the power and authority which should characterize our preaching—this is imparted by personal godliness, which Leighton calls the 'rhetoric of life:' or if we consider our capability for the work, and our success in it, how can we hope to teach, if we have not experienced the power of the Gospel? what but the experimental conviction of our own sinfulness can enable us to expose the deformity and deceitfulness of sin? how can we encourage or guide, except as the consolations and truths of the Gospel have been received into our own hearts? how can we exhibit the love of the Saviour, the faithfulness of his word, the beauty of holiness, the prospects of eternity, if we cannot say, "we also believe, and therefore speak?" It is when we have *proved* our armour, we may venture to recommend it.

The most important part of the duty in which we are to approve ourselves as the ministers of God, consists in our *public ministrations*: of these the work of preaching is the most responsible. It is on such occasions that the body of the church appears seeking the law of the Lord at our mouths—and this ordinance we are assured is the grand instrumentality of our people's salvation; for "how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher?" Hooker's judgment

may be noticed—"So worthy a part of divine service we should greatly wrong, if we did not esteem preaching as the blessed ordinance of God—sermons as keys to the soul, as spurs to the good affections of men, unto the sound and healthy as food, as medicine unto diseased minds." Such an ordinance calls for no slight study and preparation. If the pulpit be the seat of usefulness, if souls are to be converted and built up there—then, whatever we do should be done with a design to make this more effective. The demands that are daily made upon us for knowledge and wisdom, to direct and to control, to establish and to uphold, to comfort, reprove, and exhort, are drawing upon our present resources, and call for increasing supplies to be poured in to meet the increasing exigencies: we must keep pace with the advancing knowledge of the day—we must acquaint ourselves, first of all, with the entire range of revealed truth—the whole counsel of God: we should also search human writings on sound theology, bringing forth from these treasures the wisdom and experience, and the fruits of the labours of those in whom the Spirit of God was: we should be conversant with the chief controversies of the day; for our office is that of watchmen and soldiers, as well as shepherds—to defend the truth, in all meekness of wisdom, as well as to feed the flock, to be able to bring forth, against those who differ, sound doctrine which cannot be gainsayed; and this not in the indulgence of a vain-glorious angry spirit, but in the spirit of true charity, and in the fulfilment of the pledge which we made at our ordination, when we solemnly engaged "with all care and diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines." If the admonition, "Give attendance to reading," were requisite in the apostolic age, when the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit were superadded to the ministry, how much more now, when these are withdrawn, and a like necessity exists? But while we thus bring forth the



results of meditation and extensive reading into our pulpits, we must not be tempted to keep back the doctrine of Christ and him crucified—we must ever hold this forth, in all the clearness and simplicity of the Bible. If this be kept out of sight, with all our reading we do but “darken counsel by words without saving knowledge.” By the doctrine of Christ crucified, is meant not the continual mention of his name, or the continual statement of his justifying death, but the entering into and opening his various offices and characters, the glories of his person and work, his relation to us, and ours to him, having all the lines centering in Him. It was well observed by Archbishop Secker to his clergy—“We have in fact lost many of our people to sectaries, by not preaching in a manner sufficiently evangelical—and shall neither recover them from the extravagancies into which they have run, or keep more from going over to them, but by returning to the right way, declaring all the counsel of God, and that principally not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.” But this may be carried to an extreme—doctrines may be too nakedly, too exclusively enforced—they must be presented with the experience, and with the holiness of the Gospel; for this is the end, the fruit of our work—a holiness of which the love of God, and a devoted attachment to the Redeemer are the soul, which, pervading every limb, and expressing itself in every feature of the new man, gives it a beauty all its own. Let the acquirements of religion be associated with its privileges. On the whole, brethren, when we consider the honourable position given to the institution of preaching by the Scriptures, and the great end designed by it, we must conclude that he who makes little preparation, tempts God to come out of his ordinary way to his assistance, and he that depends upon his preparation, makes a god of his gifts.

While we thus give the first place to

the pulpit, because the Bible and the Church do so, we must not undervalue the importance of the other ordinances of our public ministrations—the worship of God, and the sacraments. We are not ignorant of the value of these ordinances—the advantage and blessing with which the promise of God has connected the right performance of them—and we know too, the excellency of the “form of sound words,” in which these ordinances are administered by us, its spirituality, its Scriptural correctness and unction—its suitability to the edification of our assembled people. But are we mindful of the danger to which we are liable, of bringing an unprepared spirit, a spirit of formality to these holy services? are we alive to the hazard of losing a prayerful, believing frame, through the familiarity of oft repeated ordinances? we should watch against this—a devotional mind, while it ensures the minister’s own refreshment and strength, gives a power and an efficiency to the worship in which he is engaged. It shows the people, that they are about a serious work—it quickens attention, it makes them feel—this is prayer—“this is none other than the house of God—this is the gate of heaven.” We are not sufficiently aware of the power which we wield in the administration of public worship and of the sacraments. Two causes mar their usefulness—the ignorance of the people, and the absence of a spiritual mind on the part of the minister. As long as deadness and formality are found in our religious assemblies—as long as ignorance, and superstition, and error, prevail with regard to the sacraments, we cannot look with confidence for a blessing upon the administration. Let us instruct our people in these things, let us bring the unction of a devotional spirit, along with us, to these duties, and we shall, with God’s blessing, witness an improvement amongst our people.

The other branches of ministerial duty may be included under the head of *Pri-*

*vite ministrations.* And here, brethren, I desire again to remember, I am not teaching—I profess not to show you what you ought to do; but I desire to have my own mind as well as yours drawn with serious thought to those things which, though we knew them before, we need to be established in, that “in all things we may approve ourselves as the ministers of God.” The Scriptures, the mirror of the Christian ministry, make large allusion to the pastoral department of the office. The terms shepherds, watchmen, overseers, stewards, import not a mere general superintendence, but an acquaintance with individual wants, and a distribution suitable to the occasion. The great apostle neglected not, when in a settled ministry, to go “from house to house,” when occasion required. I have often thought upon the words of a pious minister, whose writings are well known—“My heart does not upbraid me with having kept back any thing profitable to my people, but I fear I have not followed them sufficiently with domestic and personal exhortations.” Bishops Burnet and Leighton enjoin it on the consciences of their clergy; the former, in remarking on the question in the ordination service, upon this point, says—“This is as plainly personal and constant as words can make any thing, and in this is expressed the so much neglected but so necessary duty which incumbents owe their flocks, in a private way, visiting, instructing, and admonishing them, which is one of the most useful and important parts of their duty.” It is, brethren, a part of our duty to which perhaps the most reluctance is felt, and in which perhaps the greatest difficulty is found. We may gratify our vanity by preaching, but diligence in private can scarcely arrive from any thing but a sense of duty. Have we not found the advantage of such private diligence, in giving greater efficiency to our pulpit instructions, in giving an impulse to our reading, in making us acquainted with the ways of the human heart, and

with the particular cases which call for counsel—in preventing schism, and directing the awakened conscience to sound and wholesome truth? How else can we have the mind of the apostle, “who is weak, and I am not weak—who is offended and I burn not?” There is one part of the pastoral work whose importance we cannot overrate—I allude to the instruction of the young. We know and lament the great ignorance which prevails amongst many of our people, and what little instruction they derive from pulpit discourses, even though we use as we should do, “great plainness of speech:” we grieve over their unintelligent and loose attachment to the church, while we see them almost unalterably fixed in wrong and pernicious habits of thought and life. Much of this is to be traced to the defectiveness of religious education. It is in the morning of life that the seeds of spiritual knowledge should be sown—then the principles which we would wish to observe directing and influencing them in after life should be implanted; wherefore we ought to rejoice in the wide spreading of Sunday school institutions. We should value them as combining many blessings—as the means of imparting saving and sanctifying knowledge to children, and of engaging the gifts of the Christian portion of our laity, in the promotion of their Redeemer’s kingdom. But should they not be under the vigilant superintendence of the minister? should they supersede his catechetical, and (where numbers do not hinder it) individual instruction according to the wise provision of the church—“these ought we to do, and not to leave the other undone?” By this the minister is enabled to give those special instructions, which he best knows them to stand in need of; he is thus securing their attachment to the church, and laying the foundation for their adherence to it in future life. In the valuable biography of Doddridge, his mind is thus recorded—“Oh! could I spend more of my time in catechizing children, in ex-

horting heads of families, in addressing young people!" The important rite of Confirmation may be made valuable as a point to which all religious instruction is more immediately to lead, being the ordinance in which, by their own act, the young of the flock confirm their baptismal engagements, and devote themselves to the Lord.

But to conclude, brethren, when we survey this our work of unspeakable dignity, of awfully important and continually pressing duty, have we not cause to pray that we may realize our responsibility—responsibility in regard to our care and diligence, our talents, our preaching, our example? It is the conviction of the excellency and the difficulty of the work that will operate as a check to indolence and carelessness, prepare us for the improvement of all gifts and graces, call forth a spirit of prayer, and exercise an entire dependence on Christ: it will preserve against being diverted from our work, and make us deeply solicitous about success. Let us feel that we cannot singly ruin or save ourselves. Do not our consciences tell us that did we but realize the

value of the soul—were we suitably impressed with the love of the Saviour, or with a sense of our obligations, we should not minister as we do, that we have reason to be ashamed of every sermon we preach, and to tremble at every death amongst our flock, which tells us that another account is carried before the Judge—an account linked with our own, and crowded with sins of ministerial omission and unfaithfulness, compelling us to cry—"Deliver us from blood guiltiness, O God." "Who is sufficient for these things?" Let us remember for our comfort, that our ministration is preeminently the ministration of the Spirit. It is He who qualifies and sends forth ministers—He sustains them also, and gives them success. By keeping close to the fountain of grace, we secure a large measure of this influence—we go forth to our work with seriousness and power—we converse with eternity—we are preserved from the snares which compass us on every side, and we will behold too the pleasure of the Lord in the advancement of his kingdom to prosper in our hands.

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# THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

## GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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REV. W. BALFOUR.

REV. GEORGE ROSA.

LOVE.

### A SERMON,

PREACHED AT ASKEATON CHURCH, CO. LIMERICK,

BY THE REV. WILLOUGHBY BALFOUR, A.M.

Late Rector of Askeaton.

1 JOHN, iv. 7.

“ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God ; and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God.”

THIS epistle of St. John is full of power throughout : of the power, if one may so speak, of *Love*.

Of all those that attached themselves to the service of the Lord Jesus, when on earth, St. John seems to have caught most of the spirit and temper of his Divine Master. There is a tone of simplicity and heavenly mindedness, of calmness and energy about all he writes, that commends itself to us, as what was naturally to have been expected from “the disciple that Jesus loved.” We have in *his* gospel more of the mind of Christ than in any

of the others. Our Lord’s words seem to have made a deeper impression upon him than upon his fellow evangelists. Whilst they give facts, he records conversations : it is from him we have our Lord’s farewell discourses—His most touching promises, and endearing expressions.

Love only understands love. He whose love is strongest will enter best into the spirit and meaning of him he loves. From the tone, therefore, of this apostles’ writings, we should gather how it was that he was singled out as the espe-



cial object of Christ's regard. He discerned in him a kindred spirit; would *we* inherit this spirit? would *we* enjoy something of the same happy fellowship that existed between the beloved disciple and his Lord? let us tread in St. John's footsteps—let us follow him, as he followed Christ—let us trace, as he did, his master's character, and dwell, as he did, upon his master's words, till our whole souls come under their healing power, and take the same heavenly stamp and colouring with his.

And can I choose words that breathe more of Heaven—of the spirit of Heaven than those I have just now read to you—“Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.”

The apostle is writing to the church of God—the children of God, as he had just before termed them—“ye are *of God*, little children.” He, therefore, calls upon them to be like God, as if he would say—“Show something of the spirit of your Father—*His* is a spirit of love;—*love* is His character,—love is his nature;—ye that partake that nature, bear *ye* love one towards another;—in *thus* loving ye shall know that ye are His; “for every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God;” to love, is to have the life of God in the soul—ye cannot have love, but from Him—if ye have it, ye are His—you bear his image and superscription—you are of the true vine—your fruits declare it.

Such seems the line of the apostle's argument: and now to apply it to yourselves. My brethren, shall I say that you have need of such an admonition? or, rather, may I not take up towards many of you

the language of the apostle Paul to the Thessalonians, “as touching brotherly love ye need *not* that I write to you, for you yourselves are taught of God to love one another; and indeed ye do it toward all the brethren; but we beseech you that ye increase more and more.” Yes, this would be to be indeed increasing “with all the increase of God,” to be shining indeed unto the *perfect* day.

What a parish would not that be, in which *all* thus walked, in which *all* were found thus growing up to the *full* measure of the stature of Christ! would not the voice of joy and health be heard then in its dwellings—the voice of the soul's joy—the music of healthful affections? In such a place as this, if in any, it is, as David speaks, that God has *promised* His blessing—yes, he himself would dwell there, “for he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and *God in him*.”

But what does the apostle mean by love? Do we not all know his meaning? not in *some* sense to know it, would be to be strangers to the deepest and purest feeling of the human breast. The love of friends—the love of home—the love of country—do we not know what these mean? yet is the love of which St. John speaks a higher principle than any of these all. It rises far above their level, and finds its own only in the bosom of God. It is a sharing of the Divine nature,—a partaking of that fulness which goes out through the universe, communicating its own happiness, and rejoicing in the happiness that it bestows; it lives for others; it yearns towards them, still spending itself, in acts of kindness, and living only thus to spend itself more and more.

To turn to the portrait of it as given by

St. Paul, by him who was himself the living personification of what he portrayed—this is the love that “suffers long, and is kind, that envieth not”—is not jealous,—that is—of the preference given to others—“that vaunteth not itself,”—is not ready to put itself forward, but considers all claims before its own; “is not puffed up”—with a high opinion of its own good qualities; no, but rather loves the shade;—“doth not behave itself unseemly,”—knows, that is, the respect due to its neighbours, and yields it,—“seeketh not her own,”—her own credit, interest, elevation, either at the expense or to the exclusion of others. This is the love that is not “easily provoked;” no—for it is ready to bless its enemies—“thinketh no evil,”—harbours no evil thoughts of any man,—that “rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth,”—grieves over evil, and delights in good,—that beareth or draws a veil over all things to the disadvantage of its fellows,—hiding their faults, instead of blazoning them,—“believeth all things” favourable of them,—still hopes, where it may not believe, and where it can neither hope nor believe, bears patiently and sweetly, what it cannot remedy, but might revenge.

Such is St. Paul’s delineation of this master principle of the renewed soul: but to place it in a yet stronger light, let us contrast it, as we have it in a still more winning aspect—every touch and trait of it, as here given, exemplified in the character of our Lord; let us contrast this, I say, with the spirit that is its opposite,—the spirit of the world,—the spirit that meets us, turn where we will, in our streets and markets, aye, or, it may be, in

our own homes, and we shall then be best prepared to feel its value.

Take a family, for instance, where the apostle’s admonition is unknown, or disregarded; and watch the behaviour of the children, as they go and come upon their different employments through the day. Is all gentleness and sweetness in such a family?—no cross words, or sour looks, or angry tempers?—no tears ever on the cheek, or clouds upon the brow, but all peace and sunshine?—all cheerful obedience to a father’s orders; all ready compliance with a mother’s wishes; tones of love, and looks of love, and acts of love; a hand at the service of all, and, what is more, a heart at the service of all; longing to make all as happy as itself?

Ah! I am thinking, I fear, of a far different home from those we are accustomed to;—the home of one, of whom we are emphatically told, that “He was *subject* to His parents,”—of one who, whilst He might have had legions of angels to wait upon Him, was found lightening those parents’ labours by His daily toil.

But what would it be to have every boy and girl amongst us thus treading in the footsteps of the Holy Child Jesus! He had brothers and sisters we are told,—*how* would he act by them? would they ever have to complain of His roughness, His peevishness, or His setting himself up over them? nay, but do we not find that He had made Himself of so little consequence among them, that His own brethren would not believe of Him, that He was the Son of God! Oh, my children, pray to the Lord Jesus to make you such as He was, to teach you how to be in your own homes, as He was in His home in

Nazareth—the light and ornament of that home: happy those who are thus taught of Him to love one another!

But again, in the case of parents and teachers, those whose charge it is to form the mind, and mould the character, to train up children, either in the hours of the sabbath or throughout the week,—what shall we say, is in general the spirit in which they train them? oh! is it in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? as the Lord would himself train them—as He trained His disciples when on earth—bearing with their dulness—making allowance for their infirmity—drawing them forward by the cords of *love*? Is ours, I ask, thus the charity that suffers long, and is kind? can we, each of us in our degree, take up His language, as, in contrasting His own manner of teaching with that of the scribes and lawyers, He exclaims—“Learn, learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart,”—there is nothing in *me* to repel or to discourage you?

Or is there nothing at times of petulance or impatience—no want of forbearance—no provoking to wrath—(as the apostle terms it)—and then perhaps severity in correcting what we have ourselves drawn forth? oh, have we not reason, such of us, to pray often for the same love to one another, that our Lord is day by day exercising toward us?

In rebuke, again, that most difficult of duties, how is it that we acquit ourselves? Are we careful to lean always to the side of mercy, uniting with the love that reproved the worldly-mindedness of Martha, the kindness which would find an excuse for the disciples, when they could have hardly found one for themselves? and above all, in

intercourse with others, are we slow to censure, and swift to approve,—have we learned of Him who was ever on the watch to cherish the first dawn of promise within the soul—to reward the feeblest efforts—to fan the smoking flax into a flame—who so rarely remarked upon a fault in those who followed him, whilst the whole language of His life to them was that of the apostle Paul to the Corinthians,—“Yet show I unto you a more excellent way.”

Oh for that love of Christ that grieved too deeply over the faults it witnessed, to make them the subject of remark or ridicule! which wept, whilst others would have scorned—which would not put to shame even an adulteress, as she stood trembling there before Him—no, but would breathe into her soul, in still small accents of persuasion, the hope that there was yet mercy for her—“neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more!”

But how endless are the instances in which the example of our Lord comes in, either in the way of instruction, or of silent condemnation.

Have we authority over others, either as masters or mistresses, as magistrates or landlords, what a reproof to the haughtiness of temper, that is so natural to us all, to an undue or uncharitable exercise of power—the grace of Him who, whilst Master and Lord, would wash the feet of the very disciples that acknowledged him as such; who was amongst them, as one who served, who would, by his own example, teach us, that the true worth of power lies in opening to us a wider scope for the ministry of love.

Again, we are perhaps in danger of party spirit in religion, of valuing our-

selves above our neighbours, on the score of higher privileges, or a purer creed. But the stranger, who sat by Samaria's well would remind us, that whilst *we* know what we worship, our knowledge is best employed in imparting itself to others—true love will delight itself as much in the conversion of a Samaritan, as a Jew.

But we are in pain or in depression—disposed, it may be, to dwell upon our own sorrows, and to cloak our apathy toward others, under the pretence of being overburthened ourselves: and do those words that fell from the Redeemer's lips amongst the agonies of the cross, read us no lesson—when, forgetting his own sufferings in the thought of his mother's uncheered helplessness, he sets himself to supply his place to her, as far as might be; commending her to the affection of the disciple he loved best—in that simple expression, “Behold thy mother,” uttered at such a time, we have what may surely put us to the blush for our past heartlessness, whilst it sets before us a model of happy imitation for the time to come?

Or is it possible, that we may be disposed to envy another his advantage over us? Is there anything of this dark leaven, this root of bitterness, working within the secrecies of our breasts, and have we not cause to print on our remembrance those words of Him too, who had not where to lay his head—how he said “It is more blessed to give than to receive?” Oh should we not have them sounding continually in our ears? Should we not pray to be taught to enter into their full depth and meaning? If there be one

temper tenfold more the child of hell than another, it is surely that, which leads us to repine at our neighbours' welfare, or success.

On the other hand, how lovely is that spirit which shares alike in the joys and sorrows of those around it—bearing their burdens with them, and seeking in such holy exercises of compassion, its own proper and healthy play—a spirit that finding this world for a while its home, though tending by a kind of new instinct to that which is beyond—sets itself to the happy work of winning, if it may be, many souls to glory. This is its travail—for this it thirsts, it prays, it labours:—what other business should it have in a scene such as this? What more noble work should it be engaged in, than in helping forward that, which drew from the skies the Son of God?

For those skies it is fast ripening—it is already one in spirit with their inhabitants; for love is the very atmosphere of heaven, love is the life of angels, of the spirits of the just made perfect—of God himself: and in proportion as we grow in love, we partake of God's similitude and power. Transformed ourselves, we become the instrument of transforming others; it is by means of this great principle, God chiefly works.

As in the restoration of the widow's son to life, the prophet had to lay himself upon the child, to put his mouth upon *his* mouth, his eyes upon *his* eyes, his hands upon *his* hands, to impart, as it were, the vital energy anew; and as again, in the incarnation, God came thus in immediate contact, so to speak, with man, meeting in the human nature every



faculty of his understanding, and every feeling of his heart—*so* we must work under God, in seeking to recover souls to Him—we must touch them at all points, be all things to them—unlearn our own prepossessions—do violence to our own inclinations, and strive to enlist all the resources of their nature, on the side of God—and what but love can hope to accomplish this? Love has all quickness of discernment, it is all eye, all ear, all instinct; it, and it alone, can lay its hand among the chords of human passion, and draw out what melodies it will. It is thus that it is the very power of God to raise the dead. What is it that binds the quickened soul again to Him? The love revealed in the atonement: and how should the disciples of the cross go forth into the world to fight their Master's battles unless the banner over them is love? This is the weapon by which they conquer, the badge by which they are known, the link that binds them together. The Church is to edify itself in love, to grow up in love unto its head, and it is to grow thus through eternity. And shall I need to press on you further, my brethren—on any of you—the exhortation of my text—“Beloved, let us love one another?” I do need it, for the human heart is a stubborn thing, and there are those amongst us surely, who are yet strangers to the first principles of the gospel of Christ. How should those, who neither know, or love God—love one another, in the sense at least, in which the apostle uses the term?

And yet, my brethren, you may begin to-day, what you have so long, and so madly deferred. Yet, am I sure that I can with *truth* say so? I am *not*. There

is such a thing, I believe, as a callousness of conscience, with which the Spirit of God declines to work—a searing of the soul under long and repeated trifling with convictions, at first strong—a sealing up to condemnation before the spirit quits its earthly habitation—hell, in short, begun upon earth. I do believe, the Scripture bears me out in this assertion; I do believe that there are those who have sinned themselves, in this world, past, *not* the *power* of the Spirit, but the *will* of the Spirit, to renew them—to whom repentance is *impossible*! And if there is a truth on earth that ought to startle you, my brethren, such of you as I now address, it is this. Some of you have long heard, and heard in vain—you have determined to go on a while longer in sin, or you are perhaps half forming again now, this same desperate determination; but *beware*—I am giving you warning. When I sat down to prepare to address you, I prayed to the Spirit to speak by my mouth, to give me a message to your souls. I believe He is now speaking by me. He may be making with some of you a last farewell effort: if you resist the strivings of His grace to day, He may let you alone for ever! By your own souls then, I conjure you, to arise without delay, and seek after God. If you will seek Him in real earnest, it does not signify with what ignorance or imperfection, He will be fond of you—He loved you enough to give His own Son to die for you. He will uphold you with his whole heart; only pray to Him, take Christ for your Saviour, read your Bibles, and struggle against your sins—if you fall back into them, go back to Christ for

fresh pardon—fresh strength, and He will give it you; but, as you value Heaven, beware of trifling another hour with eternity thus at stake.

There are those of you my brethren, to whom the greater part of what I have said to day, has been addressed, who love God—your Saviour—one another—yes, and the whole wide world: to you I would say a few words more—you will bear with me, whilst I would stir you up to renewed and more untiring zeal. Ah! my brethren, do we pray as we ought? Do we love as we ought? Do we labour as we ought? I appeal to your own hearts, and let your Saviour hear their reply; yet I should not be speaking in my Master's spirit, did I seem to undervalue your service—no, but I would have it abound more and more. Ah! yes, let us indeed be, as a city set upon an hill, our lights shining far and brightly: let us be as living Epistles, to be seen, and read of all men—our lives proclaiming whom we serve. Let our thoughts be more toward heaven—our intercessions more unwearied—our faith stronger—our love in fuller flow: to strengthen our principles we must act upon them; love itself, unless brought into action, decays and dies; but we have every hour the opportunity of loving not in word, but in deed, and in truth. Every hour we may be denying ourselves for the sake of others, and of our Master Christ—dying more to self, and living more to God. Be this our happy aim, it will bring with it its own reward; for love is the life, the fire, the true joy, and strength of the soul—and yet to keep it in true exercise and vigour, there is more than action necessary. We must *meditate* on the great truths in

Scripture, we must be in communion with the Father and the Son, and this, not only in prayer, but praise. In Prayer, the soul is perhaps too much occupied with the thing asked for, to attend enough to the character of the giver; but we cannot praise unless our minds are occupied with God himself. It is as we draw near Him thus in child-like confidence; as we think of that grace that still rejoices over us, the unworthy children of the dust, to bless us, and to do us good; as we remember the forbearance He has shown us—the lengths he has gone to save us—the kindness that is every moment playing about us—the yearning of his soul towards us; it is as we have the Lord Jesus before us in all the endearing relations in which Scripture reveals Him, as our Shepherd—Intercessor—Brother—Husband—Friend—and the soft and winning Spirit, in His gracious offices of Comforter, and Purifier—the spring of holy desires in us—the pulse of our spiritual life—the quickener of our renewed affections, minding us and cherishing us, as a nurse cherishes her own children; it is, as we thus draw nigh to God, and see God, as we know Him as the only fountain of joy throughout the universe, as delighting in the joy He thus imparts—the happier, if we may so speak, for making all around Him happy; it is, I say, as we thus come close to God, and feel his presence, and rejoice in it, there goes forth from it a healing and transforming influence upon our souls, “Beholding thus, as in a glass, His glory, we are changed from glory to glory by His Spirit,” till we rise up by degrees in His own pure and holy likeness. Then, the love of the Father, abiding in our hearts,

overflows towards all with whom we hold intercourse—born of God and knowing God, we *naturally* love one another without effort or constraint. We are one with God, and God with us, because we have received of Him of His Spirit; and we love, because love is the natural movement of our new and spiritual life.

Let us but cling to his promises in more child-like faith—let us act more steadily on our principles—let us follow Him more closely—let us expect more largely from Him: thus,

opening our mouths wide, He will fill them—He will satisfy us with his mercy—He will cause his glory to pass before us—He will transfuse into us His own Spirit—and having trained us here by holy discipline to something of our true growth, He will remove us to that better country,—love's native home and element,—where, far from the storms that shake these lower skies, amid the airs of the eternal clime, with her twin sister joy, she sits and sings her fill amongst the branches that overshadow the Paradise of God.

BELIEVERS ONLY TRULY HAPPY.

## A SERMON,

PREACHED IN RATHCORMAC CHURCH,

BY

THE REV. GEORGE ROSS, A.M.

Curate of Rathcormac.

2 COR. vi. part of 10th verse.

“As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.”

BRETHREN—Self denial and severe trial to flesh and blood, have been at all times the lot of the Christian soldier. If you have felt the way invariably smooth and easy to be travelled, there is every reason to think you have yet *mistaken* the road, which I am assured is straight and thorny, though still attesting the truth of Scripture, is also a path of pleasantness and peace; and the pilgrims who are found upon it are “sorrowful yet always rejoicing.”

It would be well just to repeat briefly some of the causes which make the believer sorrowful, ere we go on to consider what is the subject of this day's discourse—the joys which are attainable, and make up for the troubles to be endured on the way to heaven; for, while I show the rocks as the *way marks* of the heavenward road, that souls may not be deceived, I must not conceal the green banks, lest they be discouraged. While I would declare to you from God's Word, that as surely as you have been travelling across the wilderness to the shores of heaven, you must inevitably have felt

the briers of the country. Yet, believe me, many a blossom sheds its fragrance on the atmosphere of a religious course: all who have travelled it, and are now passed into the holy city, tell us so in the record of their journey—the Bible. In the Christian bosom, the corrupt nature still remains, with this difference, that where it once held the sceptre, it now is trampled on. This nature will induce you at times to make some compromise with the world. It will ask you to omit a duty now and again, on a trifling cause; or, by some specious reasoning, to absent yourselves from the house of prayer: by gentle approaches you may be gradually drawn back into the world: Satan does not generally tempt so much to gross sin as to little infringements; one wily act of his is to lead you to do that of which you *entertain some doubt*—you do not think it is wrong, and you are not *perfectly sure* that it is right. The feeling that says, “do it, notwithstanding,” is your enemy, urging on your evil nature; though leaving the *same thing undone* would be



the safer and the religious part. True, some loss may be sustained—some gratification foregone—some gain diminished; but see how such sacrifices increase the tender delicacy of the conscience, and refine the soul to a higher purity. I do envy the individual, if I may be allowed such an expression, who can say in such cases, “I think it almost certain this thing will not displease my Heavenly Father; yet, as there may be a possibility of so doing, I will not engage in it.” Oh! if one thing more than the other attracts the complacency of heaven, it would be such a state. The person who is living daily and habitually thus denying himself in every doubtful case, may, during the moment of struggle—during the sacrifice of what he desires—suffer keenly; but the gloomy night of struggle is succeeded by a joyous morning. May he not be said to be “sorrowful yet rejoicing?” But then the Christian is also called to deny himself frequently of that which in itself is *innocent* and *lawful*: to co-operate with God, he is called on to help on the cause of charity; with his money to bring the messengers of peace on their way to peaceless lands; this he cannot well do, as he has only sufficient to support himself in the condition in which he is placed;—but if he has made his calling and election sure, he will be found *limiting* himself—depriving his appetite of what borders on necessity *rather* than keep back his mite from the Lord’s treasury. He will also be *devising* how he may make out something for his Master’s cause, by diminishing personal expenditure. Thus he goes on, looking around him where he may curtail for God’s glory, without sinking the condition in which the providence of God has

placed him;—for observe, you are not to draw a contrary conclusion from these observations; much, very much can be done without merging the station which each is called on to fill.

Such a course of self-denial—such a watchful stewardship, is the believer’s; and I cannot but instance them as a part of the trials which human nature has to bear, though mingled with such *mental* gratification as to justify the application of the text to more than the Apostle, so that though “sorrowful,” the believer is yet “rejoicing.”

Then there is the scorn of the world—the imputation of bad motives—the charge of pharasaic pride. When the christian stands aloof from former companions, and discountenances the levity, or condemns the practice of those brought into contact with him, the contempt which such an unflinching course brings upon the followers of Christ Jesus is painful to him; he is accounted beside himself, presuming, forward, righteous over-much; though, if his inward feelings were known, it might be perceived, that it is with a fainting heart many a believer stands up for his Master, to speak the truth or reprove sin—that if a warning conscience would be quiet, he would be silent. O yes—it is a painful duty to raise the solitary voice against the united ridicule or indignation of the circle with whom you may be. The single and feeble remonstrance for God is drowned by the loud simultaneous voice of the dissenting many. The man who thus, if he is found among those who love not the Lord, condemns by his gravity, or looks, or words, the conduct of others, will be shunned and avoided. To escape such an end, the believer will be tempted to conform in a

measure apparently with what goes on around him, provided it be not downright gross, while his secret heart is pained that he treads in the steps of Peter, and "denies the Lord that bought him." The charges of absurd singularity, injudiciousness, forwardness, and so forth, are among the troubles which distress the Christian, who, while he is faithful, endeavours to be so in the least offensive way. In sorrow that he is thus mistaken, he may say within himself of the gainsayers—'ah! how little do they know, that if I but consulted my own nature and ease, I should have desisted from the duty.' So he is "sorrowful, yet rejoicing," as he lifts the eye of faith and sees an approving smile beaming from the skies—one worth all the smiles of a wide world.

When, in retired meditation on these things he is enabled to say—'thou, God seest my motive, Father, if thou approve let the world condemn'—surely there is joy in the midst of sorrow; aye, joy chasing away the sorrow, and more than satisfying the tempted child of God.

The chastisements which the Christian suffers are often severe and afflicting. He is in heaviness through manifold temptations.—When he follows Jesus afar off—when he loves an earthly object too much—when he is deriving his satisfaction from secondary blessings, and it is doubtful how long God may be his chief joy,—then He that will not give his place to another, or suffer the *first* step to his throne to be ascended, will visit his people's iniquities with stripes, but will not remove his loving kindness from them. How boundless is the love of our Father, who, where he might cast off his short coming children, mercifully sends his chastisements to bring back the

heart in undivided affection to himself; to remove the cause of our slow growth in the tempers and feelings of true religion. These "chastisements for the present are grievous, but afterwards they yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness." Oh! these stripes of love are not the least cause of that deep gratitude which swells the Christian bosom, as he perceives the effect of these troubles. The consolation and joy of closer union with the Saviour is not obtained at too dear a rate by the deepest trials we are subjected to. The mariner to the shores of heaven can cry out, 'give me the billows with my Pilot rather than the smooth sea without him; give me sickness, want or woe—but, Lord, leave me myself'—

"The dearest idol I have known,  
Whate'er that idol be;  
Help me to tear it from thy throne,  
And worship only thee."

So far it is evident that the Christian in this life is subject to sorrows from various causes, some of which I have instanced. These hot conflicts between grace and the opposition of our evil nature—between self-pleasing and self-denial—are not so severe after grace has had *frequently the mastery*; but, though weakened and wounded, the enemy is still in the land, nor will he leave you to perfect rest until you have chased him to the banks of Jordan;—*there*, oh, the *happy parting*—the *happy meeting*: there you *part* with sin for ever—there you *meet* with Jesus, to spend with him the long for-ever!

It may be thought by many, that the various requirements of Christianity, the self-denial, the decided separation from the world, the refusal of every

unholy compliance, whatever be the loss, the close, and watchful, and delicate observance of the law of God in its true spirit—I say these may be thought a bondage from which one would shrink. True: *without* a changed heart and a new nature it would be a sore burden; but this very distaste ought most palpably convince you of the entire want of preparation under which man lies, till God's Holy Spirit renews his soul by His effectual agency. Yet, let it not be supposed for a moment, that with all the troubles peculiarly attendant on true religion, that the Christian passes a cheerless existence, or bids farewell to joy when he enters the straight gate. Ah! no, my brethren, for believe me, if there were no soft skies beyond the grave, no green fields of Paradise for the traveller's weary foot to tread, as he reaches the end of his hard road, he would not go back to his former course. Is it nothing to have the troubled passions bound down, the rankling of revenge, the fever of resentment quieted, and bitter disappointment deprived of its sting?—the anxious love of the world—Oh! what a devastation of peace in the bosom where these stormy passions know no restraint;—what a haven, what a delightful calm, where these are daily dying away! But the child of God has greater joys than these, though they, it is evident, are sufficient to make a religious course pleasanter in this life than the ways of sin. There is an *inexplicable* joy, a joy in which a stranger meddles not, it is the *sense* of being beloved by one who is all that is pure and lovely—by one who is the same to day in the Heavens as when he wept in the house of mourning on earth. Oh! we are too apt to look upon all this love of God as the benevo-

lence of a good king rather than the very tender affections of a fond father, a husband, or bosom friend. If you looked upon it as something more familiar, more like *real love*, it would touch your affections with greater power. Can we forget that the disciple whom Jesus loved, rested his head upon his Saviour's bosom, and knew that he was welcome there? Oh! what must have been the heaven of the disciples soul, as he felt that the pillow beneath his head was *love—love for him!* for it is not so much that God loves, as that God loves *me*, that speaks to my affections, and leads me on to duty. Such deep draughts of joy as must have been experienced at these moments, more than compensated for the taunt, and the scorn, and the exclusion to which the disciples of Jesus were exposed, “In sorrow they were yet rejoicing.” When their Master passed into the skies, the remembrance of those holy meetings, now no more, may have saddened their hearts, yet it brought the joyful assurance that he “still lived to make intercession for them.”

Now why should not we appropriate all this to ourselves? Let it not be answered that we are too unworthy; for be it remembered, that no Christian is more shortcoming or defective than those very disciples were. The road to the fountain is open to *all who will*; the virtue of the waters will overcome the scarlet sin spots, “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all* sin,” and loudest is the angels' joy when a monster of iniquity approaches the healing waters of salvation; for, as the greater the disease, the greater credit to the physician's skill in the cure, so, the deeper the depravity, the more glory to the grace that overcame it. If you

really desire to be freed from every sin of every kind and degree, though you had the accumulated sin of the world, you might lean with perfect security on this *limitless* promise of Jesus, "whosoever cometh unto me, I will in *no wise* cast out—"you might lean on it, and plead it to day, and depart with the pulse of immortality throbbing in your soul: you might ask, and expect, and receive a new heart from Christ this morning—you might go home rejoicing at having found Him of whom Moses and the prophets spake, and well might you be of good cheer when the Spirit has whispered to your conscience, "thy sins are forgiven," when the arms of the Deity and love are around you, which neither angel nor principality, nor power, can separate or disunite.

Oh! brethren, is not all this happy hope, this happier assurance, enough to verify the text, that though "sorrowful the believer is always rejoicing?" Yes, there may, and has been joy, though the Christian be as the persecuted writer of this epistle, deprived of every earthly comfort, though the fire of martyrdom flashed around him.

Oh! the prospect is something to reach the home of happy spirits, to see there, love in every face, and purity in every breast, to sit down with some redeemed group by the still waters, and talk over the wonders of redeeming love—and all this holy converse in the Saviour's gladdening presence! No wonder that Jesus should say to his sorrowing disciples, "your sorrow shall be turned into joy, your joy no man taketh from you." Your fellow man can deprive you of property, friends, life; but all his ingenuity cannot touch the immortal part or take the Christian's joy from him.

In all the persecutions which the subtlety of the devil or man worketh against us, the perception of God's favor may be clearer, the presence of the Saviour be little short of sense. And when the people of the Lord who once felt this presence and have lost it by some negligence or unfaithfulness, though to the world they may be in circumstances of ease, so long again for Him, they would be satisfied to obtain Him in affliction, to go with Him through the flood, to say with Peter, 'bid me walk to thee even on the waters.' Oh! brethren, the joy of a close walk with God is inconceivably great; as an instance of which, allow me to mention a striking case: some years ago, (as Mr Abbott informs us in one of his works,) a little boy in America was so powerfully under the influence of religion, that the praise which his sweetness of disposition drew forth from those who could only see to admire him, would pain the boy. It could hardly be thought that one so matured for glory, would be suffered to remain long in this world, and accordingly the lovely plant was carried to the paradise of God; but ere he closed his eyes in Jesus, a disease of peculiar torment afflicted this lamb of the Saviour's flock: the physician, looking with amazement on the silent sufferer, said, 'Nathan, are you happy?' The boy, fixing his half closed eyes, said, 'oh! yes, very happy, for

"Jesus can make a dying bed  
Soft as downy pillows are."

And now, my brethren, have I not proved that there is an extraordinary power in religion? The flock of Jesus at the time of his death had joy—the sickly occupant of the straw pallet has joy—the Christian family pinched with poverty, have joy. Oh! shall I now in vain urge



upon you to proceed on through every sacrifice in the path of religion, to make sure by your life of obedience that you have been united to Christ? For these pleasures are not tasted by the half religious, no, nor by the compromising, worldly Christian, nor by the man of little prayer, nor by the hurried and forced reader of the Bible, nor by the usurious, who tread almost on the skirts of honesty.

Live then close to God, thus shall you be happy here: I never said if you are converted, you shall drink deep of the

waters of comfort; you must be a peculiar people separate from the world—in your aim and in your spirit, dying daily to sin, growing in grace, increasing in christian duty and christian feeling. Oh! pursue after these, and sigh not at your weakness to ascend this lofty eminence—*Christ is your strength your shield*; the battle is the Lord's, lean upon Him, lean alone upon Him, then assay to climb the steep ascent to heaven—

“And tho' sin and death endeavour  
From his love, your soul to sever  
Jesus is your strength for ever.”

## FINAL JUDGMENT.

Resurrection will be no privilege to them; (the ungodly,) but immortality itself their everlasting curse.—Would they not bless the grave, “that land where all things are forgotten;” and wish to lie eternally hid in its deepest gloom? But the dust refuses to conceal their persons, or to draw a veil over their practices. They must also awake; must arise; must appear at the bar: and meet the Judge: a judge before whom “the pillars of heaven tremble, and the earth melts away;” a judge, once long-suffering and very compassionate, but now unalterably determined to teach stubborn offenders,—what it is to provoke the Omnipotent Godhead, what it is to trample on the blood of his Son, and offer despite to all the gracious evertures of his Spirit.

O! the perplexity! the distraction! that must seize the impenitent rebels, when they are summoned to the great tribunal! What will they do in this day of severe visitation! this day of final

decision.—Where? how? whence can they find help?—To which of the saints will they turn? Whither betake themselves for shelter or for succour? Alas! it is all in vain; it is all too late.—Friends and acquaintances know them no more; men and angels abandon them to their approaching doom; even the Mediator, the Mediator himself deserts them in this dreadful hour.—To fly, it will be impracticable: to justify themselves, still more impossible; and now to make any supplications, utterly unavailable.

Behold! the books are opened! the secrets of all hearts are disclosed! the hidden things of darkness are brought to light! How empty, how ineffectual now, are all those refined artifices, with which hypocrites imposed upon their fellow creatures, and preserved a character in the sight of men!—the jealous God who has been about their path, and about their bed, and espied out all their ways, “sets before them the things that they have

done." They cannot answer him one in a thousand, nor stand in the awful judgment. The heavens reveal their iniquities, and the earth rises up against them. (Job. xx. 27.) They are speechless with guilt, and stigmatized with infamy before all the armies of the sky, and all the nations of the redeemed.—What a favour would they esteem it, to hide their ashamed heads in the bottom of the ocean, or even to be buried beneath the ruins of the tottering world!

If the contempt poured upon them be thus insupportable, how will their hearts endure, when the sword of infinite indignation is unsheathed, and fiercely waved around their defenceless heads, or pointed directly at their naked breasts! How must the wretches scream with wild amazement, and rend the very heavens with their cries, when the right aiming thunderbolts go abroad! go abroad with a dreadful commission, to drive them from the kingdom of glory; and plunge them—not into the sorrows of a moment, or the tortures of an hour, but into all the restless agonies of unquenchable fire, and everlasting despair!

Misery of miseries! too shocking for reflection to dwell upon. But if so dismal to foresee, and that at a distance, together with some comfortable expectation of escaping it.—O! how bitter, inconceivably bitter, to bear without any intermission, or any mitigation, through hopeless and eternal ages!

Who has any bowels of pity? Who has any sentiments of compassion? Who has any tender concern for his fellow creatures? Who? In God's name, and for Christ's sake, let him show it by warning every man, and beseeching every man, to seek the Lord while he may be found; to throw down the arms of rebellion, before the act of indemnity expires; submissively to adore the Lamb, while he holds out the golden sceptre.—Here let us act the friendly part to mankind; here let the whole force of our benevolence

exert itself: in exhorting relations, acquaintance, neighbours, whomsoever we may probably influence, to take the wings of faith unfeigned, or repentance undelayed, and flee away from this wrath to come.

Upon the whole, what stupendous discoveries are these! Lay them up in faithful remembrance, O my soul. Recollect them with the most serious attention, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. When thou walkest; receive them for thy companions; when thou talkest, listen to them as thy prompters; and whatever thou dost, consult them as thy directors.—Influenced by these considerations, thy views will greatness, thy affections be exalted, and thou thyself raised above the tantalizing power of perishing things. Duly mindful of these, it will be the sum of thy desires, and the scope of thy endeavours, to gain the approbation of that sovereign Being, who will then fill the throne, and pronounce the decisive sentence. Thou wilt see nothing worth a wish, in comparison of having his will for thy rule; his glory for thy aim; and his Holy Spirit for thy ever actuating principal.

Wonder, O man; be lost in admiration, at those prodigious events, which are coming upon the universe; events, the greatness of which nothing finite can measure; such as will cause whatever is considerable or momentous in the annals of all generations, to sink into littleness or nothing;—events (Jesus prepare us for their approach! defend us, when they take place!) big with the everlasting fates of all the living and all the dead.—I must see the graves cleaving, the sea teeming, and swarms unsuspected, crowds unnumbered, yea, multitudes of thronging nations, rising from both.—I must see the world in flames, must stand at the dissolution of all terrestrial things: and be an attendant on the burial of nature. I must see the vast expanse of the sky wrapt up like a scroll; and the incarnate God

issuing forth from light inaccessible, with ten thousand times ten thousand angels, to judge both men and devils.—I must see the curtain of time drop; see all eternity disclosed to view, and enter upon a state of being, that will never, never have an end!

And ought I not (let the vainest imagination determine; ought I not) to try the sincerity of my faith, and take heed to my ways? Is there an inquiry, is there a care, of greater, of equal, of comparable importance?—Is not this an infinitely pressing call, to see that my loins are girded about, my lamp trimmed, and my-

self dressed for the Bridegroom's appearance: that, washed in the fountain opened in my Saviour's side, and clad with the marriage garment, wove by his obedience, I may be found, in peace, unblameable, and unproveable? Otherwise, how shall I stand with boldness, when the stars of heaven fall from their orbs? How shall I come forth erect and courageous, when the earth itself reels to and fro like a drunkard? (Isa. xxiv. 20.) How shall I look up with joy and see my salvation drawing nigh, when the hearts of millions and millions fail for fear?

REV. J. HERVEY.

#### PSALMS—XXII. XXIII. AND XXIV.

It is not (I think) generally noticed, that these three Psalms set forth in the clearest and most explicit way, and in the regular order of succession, the crucifixion, the death, and the ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ. That the first of these refers to His crucifixion is clear from internal evidence; and in this opinion, our Church has concurred, having selected it as one of the proper Psalms to be read on Good Friday. And that the last of these refers to His ascension, it has also determined, having selected it as one of the proper Psalms for Ascension Day. Having then, made sure of the truth of the 22 and 24 having a reference to His crucifixion and ascension, we will find on examination, that the 23rd as clearly sets forth His death, where we have the Spirit of our Great Redeemer walking through the dark valley of the shadow of death. But it is not in this fact alone, that the beauty of these consist, as there are many others of the Psalms of David which speak as pathetically of the sufferings, and as glowingly of the exaltation of Christ; but it is that harmonious order of regularity and succession in which they are presented to us, and which, on examination, we will find to be neither fanciful or imaginary. For

in the 22 we see the sweet Psalmist of Israel, the great antitype of Christ, strike from the strings of his sacred harp the plaintive notes of sorrow, so touching, so highly wrought with pathos, that it seems to be the outbreak of a bursting heart—follow out that Psalm, and the same air of melancholy runs throughout all. Then in the 23rd the sacred musician slightly alters his strain, it is not so plaintive—not so fraught with pathos as the former; but assumes an air of solemn grandeur, like the deep toned requiem which we sometimes hear, it speaks to us of death—and represents the soul when walking through that dark and benighted valley, confidently resting on the arm of its God. Then, a great change takes place—the angel of sorrow has suddenly passed away—a new spirit seems to animate the harpist, and in the 24th, he breaks forth into that magnificent and sublime description of the ascension of our Lord, and in the wild extacy of spiritual delight, addresses himself to the very portals of the angelic world—“Lift up your heads O ye gates, even lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in!”

HENRICUS.

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# THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

## GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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REV. C. M. FLEURY.

REV. W. K. TATAM.

GRACE AND PROVIDENCE.

### A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE FREE CHURCH, GREAT CHARLES-STREET,  
DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY EVENING, JULY 21st, 1839,

BY THE REV. CHARLES M. FLEURY, A. M.

Chaplain of the Molyneux Asylum.

*(And published at the request of the Congregation.)*

LUKE, iv. 25, 26.

“ But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.”

FROM the context of the chapter we learn, that the reference in this passage was made by our Lord, to illustrate and prove the sovereignty of God, and his predestinating mercy. By sovereignty, we understand that free, arbitrary, and uncontrolable power and right, inherent in the Almighty, to do with his creatures according to the

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good pleasure of his will: it was with such sovereignty he acted, when it pleased him to decline exhibiting in Nazareth miracles, like those which he had displayed at Capernaum. And it was with such sovereignty he passed over the legitimate descendants of Israel, in the days of Ahab, and caused his favour and

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preserving mercy to rest on the habitation and person of a gentile widow. "Known unto God, are all his works from the beginning." It was his everlasting design, then, to hold back the display of omnipotence at Nazareth, as it had been the everlasting purpose of his grace in the midst of sinners, to select the widow of Sarepta, and cause all blessings to descend on her alone.

Why should we quarrel with this doctrine of predestination? Alas! it is our ignorance and our pride, that induce us to condemn as cruelty, the predestinating mercy of God; to which mercy, predestinating mercy alone, is ascribable the salvation of any sinner in this rebel world. True, God has given his Son to die, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. Now, who will believe? Fling out the proclamation of redeeming love wide upon the world—sound the tidings of salvation over the whole globe, and who will naturally draw near to plead the proclaimed pardon? Not one! Our hearts are at *enmity* with God, and when he condescends even to importune the sinner to repentance and life, the ingrate and desperate monster man, turns from God's merciful entreaty with abhorrence. Therefore is it written, "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, who were born not of flesh, nor of blood, nor of the *will* of man, but of God"—of God's overruling grace, which gently leads the will captive, and effectually brings the sinner into peace. Such is the course of mercy, and such course has been known to, and decreed of God, from everlasting. Shall we quarrel then with predestinating love, when, were it not for such love, neither you, nor I, nor any mortal should ever see the face of God and live? God forbid!—may we learn to prize and bless that love, which, extending beyond the mere form of entreaty and admonition,

turns man to salvation, according to the eternal purpose of the God of love.

Come now to the history referred to in the text, which you will find in the 1st Lesson for this evening's service, and there, beloved friends, you have a most edifying exemplification of divine grace and mercy, in the brief account of the widow of Sarepta.

In the first place, we learn from this 17th chapter of 1st Kings, that God is no respecter of persons; that is to say, is a sovereign in dispensing mercy: or, in other words, you learn that mercy is not limited to class or party, to tribe or kindred, but that whoever believes in the name of the Lord Jesus, without distinction of any earthly character, is saved for ever. To this agree the words of the Apostle Peter, as you read them in Acts x. 34, 35, "Of a truth I perceive, that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." This poor gentile widow, having no claim by kindred or country on the God of Abraham, found grace through faith, and all and every earthly objection hindered not the free and copious decent of mercy on her household. This you ought to understand thoroughly, and assert firmly. You, beloved, are naturally strangers to the house of Israel—gentiles—abhorred of literal Israel, and looked upon by all of that once chosen race, as outcasts and reprobates for ever. But God has removed the middle wall of partition; and the words of his prophet are in course of fulfilment, "It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob; I will also give thee for a light to the gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." You think little, perhaps, of this observation; yet consider for one moment, that while the prophecy and its fulfilment give you a hope of eternal mercy, on which you previously had, and even now have, no national or in-

herited claim ; that the doctrine of peculiar favour belonging to certain families, sects, or classes, is one most prevalent in the world. You are aware of the power of caste in India, and of the estimation in which each caste is supposed to stand with the God of heaven. At home you have the same persuasion strong and deep, and boldly avowed amongst the Roman Catholics ; they tell you, that out of the church (meaning Rome) there is no salvation ; and they would thus exclude you, as heretics, from life. Here is your comfort, given in the assurance, that whosoever worketh righteousness is accepted of God ; this righteousness is the righteousness of faith. " What shall we do," said the opposing Jews to our Lord, " that we may work the works of God." " This is the work of God," did he reply, " that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Faith is in man the earnest and the seal of God's own righteousness, conferred on us by Jesus ;—and faith is the principle and power, morally speaking, by which righteousness, acceptable unto God alone, can be accomplished. Believe ye, therefore, in the Son of God, and a righteousness, never dreamed of by the ignorant Romanist, is yours—the righteousness of God himself. And here, let me beseech you not to treat the assertion of the Romanist with uncourteousness, as if he intended to triumph maliciously in your exclusion from divine regard ;—pity him rather in his ignorance, and explain to him the truth. Were his assertion justified by truth, it could be uttered with the greatest kindness and love. For when men are perishing, and know not where to find a refuge, then the declaration, that the church of Rome was the only refuge (if true) would lead to the escape of all who fled eagerly to her bosom. Teach the Romanist that his proposition is true, " that outside the church is no salvation," but show him that his application of it is false : he

would assert the true church to be Rome, show him that the true church is that alone which Jesus loved, and washed with his blood ; that all who rely on that blood belong to that church, and all who trust their own works, or merits, or penances, belong to the foul apostasy. The church of Christ is the pillar and ground-work of truth ; but the church of Rome, replete with traditions of men, and built on lies and blasphemous deceits, is and must be Babylon, doomed to perish with all her victims and slaves, under the burning wrath of the Almighty God, when he comes to take vengeance for the slaughter of his saints. Maintain this proposition in its truth firmly, even that " there is no name under heaven given among men, whereby we can be saved, but the name of Jesus." Fear not the charge of bigotry, when men object to you that such an exclusive doctrine dooms the heathen to perish. If there be another revelation extant, which declares the heathen to be as safely circumstanced as the instructed Christian, then may you endure objections ; or, if the heathen, who know nothing of Christ, exhibit a degree of moral worth, that deserves respect and praise, then may you justly fear the charge of bigotry. But while the only revelation under heaven declares salvation to be limited to the faith of Christ, and your daily observation assures you, that the unconverted heathen are " liars, men stealers, murderers of fathers, and murderers of mothers," guilty of infanticide, and every horrible crime, then rise up like men and plead for the salvation of the gospel, which is the sole salvation for our fallen race, and urge on the progress of that gospel, till every tongue on earth " has learned Messiah's name."

The second particular which we should infer from this 17th chapter of Kings is, that God oft-timess, if not always, severely chastens his people and afflicts their souls, that they may not perish with the

ungodly. This widow, it appears, had known the Lord before the prophet's visit, for God had said to him, "I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee." And again, on the prophet's arrival, she salutes him as one whose religion she appreciated: "As the Lord thy God liveth." She was involved with others in a common calamity; yet her affliction was peculiarly severe—her chastisement almost extreme. Remember she was a lonely being—a widow; and while the common calamity had driven all men, by the natural love of life, to strain every nerve for existence, she, left husbandless in the world, had none to share her sorrows, or labour for her support;—nay, more, she was burdened with an helpless babe, and thus embarrassed, incapable of such personal toil as might secure her maintainance. And that babe, too, was an additional cause of misery! When accosted by the prophet, she told out in the language of true poetry—the language that rises from the heart—fraught with meaning, and rich in pathos, she told out all her woes. Reduced now to her last morsel, and hopeless of relief, she said, "I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse, and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it and die." Here was sorrow upon sorrow; the mother, a lonely widow, friendless, amongst an unfeeling and uncivilised people, her heart bound up in the life of her poor child, she beholds the approach of death, and believes that she is called to watch over the last agonies of that child perishing with hunger. This was fearful suffering—but it was over. Divine mercy had commissioned the prophet to bring relief—and child and mother were preserved from want.

"Count it all joy, beloved, when you fall into diverse temptation," and pass under God's chastisement—they are de-

signed to work in you the comfortable fruits of righteousness. Let such chastisements assure you that God loves you, and wills not that you should perish with the wicked, who have no bands in their death, whose houses are called by their names, and who leave the residue of their substance to their babes. You are chastened for your eternal good; and grieve not under your afflictions, as if they were extreme. You have not yet come to famine, and widowhood, or loneliness; you have not yet been reduced, in a savage land, to your last morsel, and there called to gaze upon the pale and withering features of a starving babe. Your lot hath been a milder one; nevertheless, "through much tribulation (such is the general rule) you must enter the kingdom of heaven." Be ye ready then for the time of trial; watch in faith—look with faith upon every mysterious event of providence, and while to sight and sense there may appear every thing lowering, and destructive, and cruel, by faith you shall recognize the hand of Almighty love ruling in the storm—governing the affliction, and appointing all things to work together infallibly for your good.

Thirdly—From this instructive and interesting passage, you may learn the blessedness of Christian hospitality. "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares," is the command of the Apostle to the church at large. Such hospitality the widow of Sarepta had learned to offer, and she met her reward. You might suppose that she had received an express command to entertain the prophet, but the confession of her poverty and of her despair, show plainly enough, that the command given her was but the general command of the gospel—"Love one another." It was a time of dreadful distress—her own means were reduced, as we observed, to the last morsel, nevertheless, at the stranger's call for aid, she

prepared to share with him even that morsel. This was, you may well say, rare benevolence—extraordinary generosity;—it was more, it was gracious generosity;—it was the result of that faith, which taught her to recognize in every servant of God a brother—a brother for eternity, and therefore she not only hastened to bid him welcome to her scanty meal, but we can easily suppose she rejoiced in the opportunity afforded of relieving, even in the least degree, a suffering brother, and rejoiced to find in the hour of extremity, a kindred soul with whom she might hold communion, and with whom, in holy fellowship, she might offer up her dying prayer. What an accumulation of mercies was now bestowed. Her trial is over—her wants are commuted for abundance, and her solitude exchanged for the society of God's chief ambassador. All this occurred, too, in the way of recompense, for God rewards each act of faith, obedience, and patience, performed by every soul that he has saved through grace.

Let us apply the matter before us here to our own condition and duties. The service of hospitality is as much bounden on us now as it was when the brethren wandered abroad in search of a retreat, fleeing the calamities or persecutions of the world. Our Master has enjoined upon us, that we should study hospitality—but not the hospitality of the unconverted. When their feasts are prepared, and their tables laden with sumptuous fare, it is that pride may be gratified, and their wealthy, or wealthier friends, may be entertained. With us the entertainment is to be spread for the poor and needy, who cannot reward us. Not, beloved, that we should literally provide, like our unconverted fellow-creatures, sumptuous and unsuitable banquets for the poor, or throw open our houses literally to receive the wandering mendicant, or the distressed of an inferior rank, rendering them uncomfortable by a state and

ceremony, to which they were not accustomed, and cutting off by one extravagant meal, the means of affording them, in their own homes, or in proper asylums, entertainment and comfort for weeks or months to come. We are called by our Lord's command to vie with the children of this world in wisdom; and while they economise, and retrench, and prepare with all diligence for the entertainment of their friends, we should economise, retrench, and provide, with every earnest exertion, for the support and comfort of our friends, the followers of Christ. I cannot say to you that, perhaps, in the exercise of such righteous hospitality, you may entertain angels; but you may, and will certainly, entertain the God of angels, who, while he said, "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, shall in no wise lose his reward," likewise said, "Whosoever receiveth one such little child in my name, receiveth me." And is this a trifling recompense, that the Lord of angels—the God of gods should be our guest? It is the recompense and the honor, at which we should ever aim; for our true happiness, and true holiness, can arise only from fellowship with the Lord of peace, who dwells with, and shall be with his faithful people always.

Lastly, from this edifying history, we learn a solemn lesson against spiritual idolatry—against the power of besetting sin. Time rolled on, and the widow and her son rested under the shadow of the Almighty's wings, till every danger and trouble were overpassed. But there was an evil growing up in her heart, which threatened the destruction of her happiness, and were it possible, the destruction of her salvation, and that was spiritual idolatry. The object of her adoration was this only child; the object, observe, was a natural one, and the danger of excessive affection for that



object therefore the greater. Now, the God who had called her to his blessed kingdom, and had once given her a good hope through grace, was determined that his subject should not be lost, nor her hope disappointed, nor that Satan should triumph in her final ruin; therefore, by a single stroke, the desire of her eyes is removed—her idol falls—the child is dead! Hear now her language of agony, of conviction, and remorse, “What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God! art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?” While her leaf was green, and prosperity smiled on her habitation by the Lord’s providence, her soul was weakening in piety, and turning from an heavenly, to an earthly object—her declension was slow, gradual, unperceived, and unfelt, till the day of her sudden and poignant tribulation. When the divine arm inflicted the judgment, she awoke to consciousness, and broken into sorrow for the bereavement, recognised, for the first time, the sin into which she had fallen. Yet see here, beloved, the work of merciful judgment was effected—it had achieved its destined purpose, and that was, to bring home to her heart the conviction of her crime, and with conviction, repentance; therefore the judgment was reversed at once, and by the prophet’s ministry the child is restored again in life and health to her arms; and that maternal love which had clashed with the love due to God alone, now chastened and sanctified by the visitation, rejoices safely and happily in the recovery of her son. Such was the way of providence with David: his sin deserved death, was unfelt and unrepented till the prophet’s reprehension; his immediate conviction and acknowledgment, reversed the sentence and elicited the answer, “Thou shalt not die, *God hath put away thy sin!*” But, oh! how long and obstinate was the conflict between the heart of Jacob in his idolatry, and the rebuke of providence?

he idolises Joseph, and Joseph is taken from him, yet he repents not. His excessive affection is transferred to Benjamin; and while Simeon is removed, Benjamin is demanded. Then, in the heat of controversy between his erring affections and the judgment of heaven he declares, “Me have ye bereaved of my children; Joseph is not, Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away!—my son shall not go down with you! But Benjamin must be given up—the sin of the aged patriarch must be eradicated—the famine continues—death stares him in the face, and at last subdued, broken and contrite, he yields to God, sends Benjamin to Egypt with his brethren, prays a blessing on their departure, and with folded hands sits down meekly and submissively under the will of God saying, “If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.”

“Little children, keep yourselves from idols,” is the last sentence in St. John’s first epistle—his last charge to the church; to you, beloved, is that sentence addressed; and though it suits principally the early stage of the believer’s life, yet in his more matured estate you may observe, from the cases cited above, he is still open to the peril of false affection—the undue and disproportionate love of the creature. To preserve yourselves from spiritual idolatry, it is needful that you consider well both the judgments which God pours out on all declensions of heart, and the supreme loveliness of God’s own character. As a holy and jealous God, he will not receive divided homage, nor accept the service of a heart that is but partially engaged to him. His demand is “give me thy heart”—thy whole heart. The rejection of this claim, brings down on us his sad rebukes, and they are oftentimes bitter rebukes, in proportion to the enormity of our sins; he will not spare wife, or child, or husband, the dearest pledge of life, if we become backsliders from that whole and perfect

service once professed. As you love those pledges—as you would shun the fearful chastisements of heaven, flee all idolatry, and let God alone rule Lord of your affections. And why should he not thus rule? Consider the loveliness of his character, and you have all that can and should command your best and strongest regards. Is he not the God that has carried you from the birth through all the troubles, and trials, and dangers of life, safe to this hour—who fed you and nourished you in health, and watched over your sickness, with unslumbering eye-lids—provided you with all the comforts of home now possessed—the friends now prized? Is he not the God who spared you, when your iniquities deserved

death—endured, with all long-suffering, your impenitence—and has collected you this evening to hear of his mercies, and call to mind his compassions through Christ? Surely, this God of unbounded goodness, who spared not his own Son, but freely gave him up for the redemption of men—of sinful men, whether we view his bearing towards ourselves, or his great and glorious work, done for the recovery of our lost rebel race, is the God, whose every act and revelation of character fairly entitles him to our highest and holiest love. To him then, the God of all grace and providence—the God of love, be ascribed and rendered up for ever all praise, honour, and sincere regard, world without end. Amen.

THE CHURCH, THE PLANTATION OF GOD AND NOT OF MAN.

## A SERMON

PREACHED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY, 30TH JUNE, 1839,

BY THE REV. W. K. TATAM, B.D.

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MATTHEW, XV. v. 13.

“Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up.”

WE may observe, (except perhaps in some to whom the revelation of the gospel of Jesus Christ hath never come even in word,) that notwithstanding the depravity of human nature in its fallen state, there is, in a greater or less degree, a theory of the truth in the understanding, and a testimony of the truth in the conscience. Whatever remains of original righteousness is to be found in the understanding and the conscience. Thus, in the instances of Agrippa, Herod, and Felix, it is recorded, that on hearing that truth there was a reflection of it in the partial and temporary conviction of their understandings, and a response in the alarm of their startled consciences:—if one was almost persuaded to be a Christian; if another heard the word gladly, but, on his relapse, was so terrified as to take Jesus for the Baptist, whom he beheaded, risen from the dead; if the other trembled on his tribunal and amid his guards, before his helpless prisoner, reasoning of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come we must conclude, that as the gospel did not come to them in saving power on these occasions, there must have been something in the understanding and conscience of those educated heathen that could be

affected by the simple majesty of the truth of God as it is in Jesus.

It is not so with the heart; there is no good in it by nature; ‘it is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked:’ if the faculties of the mind and the powers of conscience are in some degree of healthy exercise, it is not so with the feelings and affections, they are entirely fallen—and it is the uneasy consciousness of this alienation of the heart from God—the loving of the creature more than the Creator—yea, the more than alienation of the affection—the active carnal enmity that has in every age and nation led to the invention of some kind of religion, and the almost universal adoption of sacrifices by way of expiation; while among those to whom a revelation of the truth has been given, but who have not received it in the love of it, there has been always an attempt to seek refuge and repose in something that will either obscure this lingering light of truth in the understanding, or stifle the witnessing of that truth in the conscience—the former flashing on their souls occasional glimpses of their real character before a Holy God, the latter affrighting them with fearful forebodings of his retribution as a righte-

ous God, who will by no means clear the guilty; we find no device more common than that of resting on traditional outward ordinances, and hereditary religious privileges. In different dispensations of the professing Church, there may have been variations dependent on national and other circumstances, or the alteration of ecclesiastical ceremonies and customs; but the spirit is the same, and just, because *that* in man with which it is so congenial, is ever unchanged except by the Spirit of God;—the proud, carnal, self-sufficiency of the natural man is its element, and it is agreeable to flesh and blood to be persuaded that an inward principle of holiness and character, necessarily issuing in self-denial and painful mortification, may be dispensed with, or compensated for, by the possession of ecclesiastical privilege: and the system that in any way espouses such a substitution of name, form, and ceremony for the vital power of godliness, is eagerly embraced as a sedative or palliative for the troublesome stirrings of that inward witness which, more or less, in every man corresponds with the evidence revealed in the word of God, as the apostle says, “by manifestation of the truth commending itself to every man’s conscience,” and it is felt to be a kind of relief from painful and unpleasant convictions, when the understanding can be so darkened, and the inward monitor so silenced, that an appeal can be made to the less exacting testimony of human tradition, from the strict searching inquisition of God’s holy word, which is “quick and powerful as a two-edged sword, to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit; a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart,” an instrument “mighty to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” The very fact of an appeal to another standard than that of scripture is an evidence of the absence of divine illumination in the heart.—“To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”

Early in the history of the Jewish Church, we find the prophet Jeremiah commissioned to denounce this spirit in his countrymen, “Trust ye not in lying words, saying—the temple of the Lord, the tem-

ple of the Lord are we:” and our Lord had to contend with the same in the days of his ministry—it was then the abounding and besetting corruption of the Jewish Church, cancelling all moral obligation, nullifying every holy commandment, exhibiting itself, at one time, in the self-righteousness of the man who thanked God that he was not as other men, and said to his sin-stricken neighbour, “Stand by, for I am holier than thou;” at another time, in the ceremonial exactness that would “strain at a gnat and swallow a camel,” that would “pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, omitting the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith;” at another time, in the excited zeal that would compass sea and land to make one proselyte; at another in that affected reverence for the memory of ancient martyrs that would build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous—in that ostentatious charity which, when it gave alms, caused a trumpet to be sounded before it—in that vain display of ecclesiastical costume that made broad the phylacteries and enlarged the border of their garments—in that love of pre-eminence and authority in the church that sought the chief seats in the synagogue, and greetings in the market place, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi—in that mock devotion which prayed, standing in the market place, and made long prayers for a pretence—in that feigned mortification that put on a sad countenance, and disfigured the face, that they might appear unto men to fast—in that profane reverence for the services of the sanctuary that swore by the gold of the temple and the gift on the altar—in that vain worship that was occupied with meats and drinks, with the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels and tables—with the observance of days, and months, and years—with the signs instead of the things signified—with the external and not the internal—with the carnal and not the spiritual—with the shadow instead of the substance—with the letter and not the spirit, ending in that consummate hypocrisy which our Lord described as making clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, while within they were full of uncleanness, extortion, iniquity, and excess, and to which he applied the appropriate epithet of a whited sepulchre; this was the canker that eat out all the spirituality of the Jewish



Church, until her rituals, ceremonies, and ordinances were utterly abolished by the introduction of another and a simpler dispensation. That this was the prevailing corruption of the Jewish Church, and of every professing Church, is further evident from the unqualified way in which the apostle Paul repeatedly rebukes it; thus, "in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." "Behold I, Paul, say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing;" and again—"He is not a Jew who is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh, but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God." After he had, with a holy sarcasm, enumerated their boasted privileges of "Behold thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law, and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law,"—what is the obvious inference, but that the highest external privilege may consist with the profoundest practical ignorance of God—that true religion is a plant not of earthly but of heavenly growth, not of human but divine propagation? The great design of Christ and his apostles being to inculcate that the essence of true religion was a change of heart, which, making us partakers of the divine nature, elevated the fallen affections to their proper objects—things above, and that purity of character and of life were the result of the possession of an inward principle of sanctity, not of the possession of any outward privileges, or the application of outward signs or sacraments, or the observance of ceremonials, however ordained or sanctioned by divine authority, and this was the same in the new dispensation as in the old, for a similar caution is addressed to its subjects in reference to baptism, as the counterpart of circumcision—"not the washing away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God," while the great rule of apostolical teaching, after our Lord's example was to show the connex-

ion between this inward sanctification, and the *written word* of God, in contradistinction to the testimony of human tradition, however venerable for its antiquity; the truth and true holiness being inseparable, at the same time urging the indispensableness of divine agency to effect this sanctifying change, and ascribing the whole work to God as to its author, a doctrine no less unpalatable to man with his affections estranged from God, than the necessity of this change itself; so that whatever may be a man's outward privileges as a professing member of the visible Church, whatever may be his favourable position in the vineyard of the Lord, although planted by human instrumentality in the midst of the means of grace, ordinances, ceremonies, sacraments—it availeth nothing, even though a Paul planted, and an Apollos watered, it is God alone that giveth the increase—"every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up."—In the context of this passage we have a powerful illustration of the whole subject. The occasion was the captious question of the Scribes and Pharisees to our Lord, why His disciples, contrary to the tradition of the elders, "washed not their hands when they eat bread?" to this our Lord replied, that they had so overlaid the truth with the dicta of human authority, and human testimony, that it was either neutralized or nullified, and as is the case of the obligation of the fifth commandment, that tradition was made a pretext for its flagrant violation, under the mask of a most sanctimonious regard for the glory of the sanctuary;—our Lord, to show that with all their rigid scrupulosity as concerned the interest of the temple, their services and devotion were unavailing, refers them to the prophesy of Esaias—"This people draw near unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their *heart* is far from me; in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."—Out of their own prophet, he charges them with empty formality in their worship, and hollowness in their profession; one thing they lacked—inward, heart-religion—their affections were still estranged from God; and our Lord, solicitous to impress emphatically that *inward character* was the essential of religion, turns to the multitude to explain it by a familiar illustration,

"not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man, but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man;"—there is an issue for what goeth into the mouth, but what cometh out of the mouth is the characteristic of what is within, the index of the heart, whether it is pure or polluted,—“those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart, and they defile the man; for out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies, these are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.” A doctrine such as this must necessarily be offensive, for it pronounces a blessing only on the pure in heart, carries religion away from all outward things into the innermost recesses of the bosom, exploring the motive of every action, and detecting even the hue of every thought, while it insists on a renovation of it by the Spirit of God, before there can be, in the character, a conformity to the divine image. This was the effect of our Lord's statement—“Then came the disciples and said unto him, knowest thou not that the Pharisees were offended after they heard this saying?” The disciples seem surprised, but their master expected it as a matter of course, by simply implying that they were yet strangers to the work of sovereign grace in its converting and sanctifying power; that though planted in the vineyard of the visible Church, they were not planted by his heavenly Father—he declares that such religion cannot abide—“every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up;”—and as if he intimated that there would be always many ready to teach the system which he denounced, and many as willing to be taught, he adds, in words that pourtray, with almost graphic distinctness, one of the most awful groups that can be found in the broad way that leadeth to destruction—“Let them alone, they be blind leaders of the blind, and if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.” This plantation is God's husbandry, and the process by which the trees of righteousness are planted—the work of the Father,—the planting of the Lord,—sets forth the written word as the instrument, Christ as the truth, the ground on which the tree is planted, and the Holy Spirit as the agent. The apostle, speaking of

the Church, says that it is sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water by *the word* ;—connecting the word with the sacrament of baptism as the rite of introduction to, or planting in the Church. Again, in Titus, iii. 5, “saved by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost;”—plainly declaring the instrumentality of the word and the agency of the Spirit as indispensable accompaniments of a true planting by baptism into the Church of Christ. In Peter, 1, 22, 23, we have the purification of the soul, and a purity of heart, connected with regeneration, and this with the written word—“the truth”—“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently, being *born again*, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the *word of God*, which liveth and abideth for ever;” and then in Romans, vi. 5, we have the fundamental doctrines of the gospel in the practical and experimental reception of which the sinner issaid to be planted in Christ, rooted and grounded by a living faith—“if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection;”—where the leading facts of the mystery of the holy incarnation are represented as typical and significant of the mighty change wrought by the Spirit, whereby they may be said to have died unto sin, but to be made alive unto God, raised up by the Father, as a tree rises from the ground, to walk in newness of life. In this sense the apostle James makes the word the instrument of salvation—“the *engrafted* word which is able to *save* your souls.” The figure of a plantation is employed by our Lord in John xv. not merely to show that He is the root of strength and nourishment to the true Church, but that the written word is the great instrument of an abiding sanctifying union between Him and the Church—“I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman;”—“Now ye are clean through the word.”—“If ye abide in me, and *my words* abide in you.”—“If a man abide not in me,”—that is, if he be not planted in me, by the instrumentality of my word, by the power of the Holy Ghost.—“He is cast forth as a branch and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned,”

—an awful parallel with the text—"Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up."

We have a remarkable instance also in John, 8th chap. where our Lord emphatically connects inward character with the outward written word, verse 31. "If ye continue in *my word*, then are ye my disciples indeed." This was spoken to those Jews who are said to have *believed* in him, but with that belief which results from a conviction of the understanding, on the evidence of miracles—not the assent of a heart regenerate by the power of God—not the faith which "obeys from the heart the form of doctrine into which it is delivered." Our Lord continues, "and ye shall know *the truth*, and the truth shall make you free." What was their answer?—"We be Abraham's seed," as if patriarchal succession implied spiritual succession, or the transmission of spiritual character by genealogical descent; or, as in the case of Nicodemus, who thought that it was conveyed by natural generation, until our Lord surprised him by the, to him, novel and extraordinary statement that "that which was born of the flesh was flesh, and that which was born of the Spirit was Spirit: marvel not that I said unto you, ye must be born again"—Ye Jews, with all your church privileges, and all your divine ordinances—and even you, Nicodemus, a ruler in Israel, with all your legitimate hereditary authority and dignity, sitting in Moses' seat (our Lord admits their natural and national relationship to Abraham, but he denies that they had the inward character, the distinguishing spiritual qualities of Abraham, for he detects murderous thoughts passing in their hearts) "I know that ye are Abraham's seed, but ye seek to kill me *because my word* hath no place in you,"—"if ye were Abraham's children ye would do the works of Abraham;" and in several subsequent verses our Lord ascribes their want of Abraham's spirit and temper, to the non-reception of the truth of the revealed word in their hearts—"He that is of *God* heareth *God's words*." How remarkable, too, that in the scene which our Lord discloses from the eternal world—we find, in the colloquy between Abraham and Dives, across the impassable gulf, the interchange of acknowledged relationship, father and son; while the condem-

nation of the lost is, that the Scriptures were not the rule of his life and the standard of his faith—"he believed not Moses and the prophets."

The great point we aim at in our discourse on this passage is to show that the plantation of a sinner in the true Church of Christ is the work of the Father—"No man cometh unto me except the Father which hath sent me, draw him"—and that the invariable mode by which the Father draws a sinner is through *the written word*, which he has himself given—the record of his Son. That the Father instructs the sinner with his own word, "It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all *taught* of God: every man, therefore, that hath heard and hath *learned* of the Father, cometh unto me," and that every doctrine and system of human teaching, by which a man may be planted in the visible church, as also he who is planted by such teaching, shall be rooted up; it is "the wood, hay, and stubble," that will not abide when the day shall declare and the fire shall try all false teachers, and their delusive and fallacious theories; and it will be seen that "other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, Christ Jesus."

This subject has at the present day become of supreme importance. The great controversy of this generation is, not merely the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, but their sufficiency to make wise unto salvation: it is the great point at issue on the much agitated question of national education. The open enemies of the Bible contend that secular learning is sufficient to make men truly wise. But what does the voice of history proclaim? that the experiment has been tried: in Egypt, where the learning that built the pyramids was associated with that prostration of intellect which bowed in adoration to the most loathsome reptiles;—in Greece and Rome, and other famous states of antiquity, where almost every branch of human learning was cultivated with a success that furnished posterity with examples rather to be wondered at than imitated, monuments rather than models of colossal genius—and yet the people of these countries were debased by the most senseless mythology and the most abominable crimes;—in France, where the reign of terror



was ushered in by the circulation of the magazine of useful and universal knowledge—the famous Cyclopædia;—and now, as then, the march of intellect, unguided by revelation, must lead either to the Dagon of Popery, or the Baal of infidelity. It is the emphatic statement of Scripture, “that the world by wisdom knew not God.” What can human philosophy do for man?—it is perfectly useless in that most important of all studies, *himself*;—it cannot teach him his own total ruin, and thus guide him out of himself to the only Mediator and Saviour. In a worldly sense, philosophy, like the tree in Eden, may be desired to make one wise; but without the softening influence of revealed truth, taught by the Spirit of truth, it has a hardening property, and like the fabled river of Thrace, petrifies where it flows. We must leave, then, the education of the masses of the people to Him who can enlighten without inflaming, and who can subdue the proud spirit of man at the same time that he takes him by the hand, and leads him up to the heights of the sublimest knowledge.

The professed but false friends of the Bible maintain, that the Scriptures are not sufficient without the learning and traditional interpretation of human authority; and they are to be found searching amid the rubbish of the fathers and ancient commentators on the Scriptures, for the beggarly elements of a traditionary theology, which is a mixture of Paganism, Judaism, and Popery. There is not the shadow of authority in the word of God, for such a doctrine. Were all the tomes of the fathers irrecoverably lost to-morrow, the Church would never miss them, as long as she had Christ and the Scriptures;—as Peter said to our Lord, “thou hast the words of eternal life, to whom else shall we go?” and it was on the occasion of this same Apostle confessing the fundamental truth of the Gospel, and delivering a faithful testimony to Christ, that our Lord declared, “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father which is in heaven.” It cannot but be observed how invariably our Lord would decide every controversy with the Jews by an appeal to the Scriptures—“it is written”—“search the Scriptures”—“if ye believe not his (Moses’) writings:” and he ascribes their errors to the want of an

affectionate reception of the Scriptures, through the operation of the Spirit—“how can ye believe my words?”—“Ye do err, not knowing (not the tradition of the fathers, but) the *Scriptures, and the power of God*,” and we know no more striking passage, than where our Lord gives his mysterious apology for the few learned of this world who were brought to the knowledge of the truth—“Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.” It is a notion deeply fixed in the nature of man, that superior wisdom and learning can know and apprehend God. The same question asked by the learned among the Jews, is now repeated, “Have any of the Scribes or Pharisees believed in Him?” But God’s word decides the question. “Where is the Scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world—God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world and things which are despised, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought the things which are;” and this is because “the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him—neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned.” Not that we undervalue the stores of human learning, but prize them highly when made tributary to the truth of revelation—and not that we altogether discard the testimony of the fathers, or cannot appreciate the erudition, the eloquence, the piety, the profound research to be found in the pages of some—but we say of all beside the Scriptures, “What is the chaff to the wheat?” and the best are but chaff mixed with a few grains of the incorruptible seed of God’s word. We contend that the great doctrine of the Scripture is, that the Bible is its own commentary, and God His own interpreter—the Holy Ghost, and not the Church, the great teacher of all inspired truth; that Christ has committed the tuition of his Church to the Spirit of all Truth.

When we assert the Bible to be its



own commentary, we do so without abating our reverence for the creeds and confessions of our Church. We think them powerful for the preservation of truth within, and the detection of heresy and error without; but they derive their power from the Scripture, and it is just as they embody Scripture that they possess this influence;—but we protest against ascribing to them more than the Church herself demands. She duly honours the revealed word when she declares, “Holy Scripture containeth *all things* necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is *not read therein, nor may be proved thereby is not to be required* of any man that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.” She only assigns the proper importance to the creeds, when she requires them to be received, because they “may be proved by most certain warrant of holy Scripture,” and she strictly defines her own authority, when she declares herself “*a witness and keeper of Holy Writ*”—and when we say the Bible is its own commentary, we simply mean that it is in the humble study of God’s written Word that we hear the voice of God saying, “This is the way, walk ye in it;” that it is by reading or hearing that Word, that faith cometh, that “the blind are brought by a way which they knew not, and led in paths that they have not known—darkness made light before them, and crooked things straight:” but it is in the hearing or reading of God’s written Word that all the light comes down from heaven on the soul, showing the way to the Lamb—the way of holiness in which the way-faring man, though a fool in other things, shall not err, and every one who is taught thus savingly, effectually, infallibly, is taught so immediately by the Spirit of God, who enlightens the understanding, renews the will, sanctifies the affection, and renews the man in the image of Him who created him. All such “are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

If it be objected that the Scriptures may be wrested, that the word of God may be handled deceitfully, and so perverted that different and opposite meanings be tortured out of the same passage, we do not hesitate to answer, that the final appeal must be made to the Holy

Spirit, and the only safe, because infallible, interpretation must be the result of His teaching. It is not the church, it is not the fathers who can give spiritual discernment, “the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God,” “God hath revealed them unto us by the Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea even the deep things of God,” “now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us, (or given to us by grace of God,) which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual,” and the apostle reminds the Corinthians that his “speech and preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and power.”

Our Lord, anticipating the error and ignorance with which his disciples would have to contend, plainly directs them to the Spirit’s teaching, “He the Spirit will guide you into all truth;” and his answer to the inquiry of the Jews marvelling at his doctrine, “How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?” is very remarkable as showing a connexion between the knowledge of the truth, and holy submission and obedience—“my doctrine (and learning) is not mine, but his that sent me, if any man *will do his will* he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.” The Apostle John in the first epistle, at a time when many professors had apostatized and fallen into the heresies of the antichrist of that day, ascribes the security of the true believer to the preserving influence of the Spirit—“But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things,” the Spirit of truth alone guarded them from all error in the midst of so much defection and seduction. “These things have I written concerning them which seduce you; but the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye *need not that any man teach you*, but as the same anointing teacheth you of *all things*, and is *truth*, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.” And the apostle Paul speaking of some points in which the Philippian Christians differed from the truth, and acknowledging how ineffec-

tual was human persuasion without divine teaching, does not press on them the weight of his apostolic, yea even his inspired authority, but simply adds, "and if in anything ye be otherwise minded God shall reveal even this unto you."—We might adduce many other scriptures to the same effect, but we think these are abundantly conclusive; we fear that with some, an undue attachment to tradition and human testimony, may have so biased their judgment as to abate that reverence for the authority of God's word, which is necessary even at the threshold of so important an inquiry; and we do think it of infinite importance that it should be clearly understood, that divine truth—all in fact that is emphatically entitled to the name of truth—is a principle that can only be implanted by God himself; that while the Scriptures are *sufficiently* profitable for instruction in righteousness, God alone is *sufficient* to apply the instruction, effectually, infallibly, and therefore savingly. We do not think it important merely as a theory that may be received or rejected without peril, we are persuaded that eternal consequences depend on it, and we know no doctrine more practical than that which tends, as this pre-eminently does, to throw man out of himself upon the inexhaustible resources and omnipotent energies of the Holy Spirit of God: we are persuaded, that the practical denial of this, either that the Bible is its own commentary, or the Holy Ghost his own interpreter, is at the foundation of all the monstrous abominations of Popery and every other corruption of christianity; and the plantation of every church that departs from these principles shall sooner or later receive the doom pronounced by our Lord, it shall be taken away root and branch, while the vine-yard of the Lord's right hand planting, whether individuals or communities, though ravaged by persecution and cut down almost to the very roots, shall yet be visited by a spring time of divine favour, and shall nevertheless send forth from its hewn and trampled trunk branches of richest fruitfulness and living verdure, until the hills are covered with the shadow, and the boughs thereof like the goodly cedars. Nor is the question evaded by distinguishing between the *intellectual* and *moral* teaching of the Spirit; it is most unscrip-

tural and irrational: the Spirit illuminates but to sanctify; the light is marvellous because it is holy. When God who commands the light to shine out of darkness, shines into the heart, he gives "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." When the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, gives us the spirit of wisdom, and revelation in the knowledge of Christ,—it is "that the eyes of our understanding being enlightened, we may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints"—"the entrance of the Word giveth light"—opening the eye, that we may behold wondrous things out of thy law. It is true, that to the natural man, the volume of revelation is a sealed book. The vision of all is as the words of a book that is sealed—but it is *the same seal* to the *learned and unlearned*—and none can remove that seal and open the vision but the Spirit of God. The result is, that all whose hearts are thus opened, their fear towards God is not taught by the precept of men; yea, they see it to be a marvellous work and a wonder; "the wisdom of the wise perishes—the understanding of the prudent is hid; in that day the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind see out of obscurity and out of darkness; they that erred in spirit come to understanding, and they that murmured learn doctrine." Nor will it avail to object that men holding opposite views of essential truth, have also professed to have sought and obtained the teaching and direction of the Holy Spirit. There is but one answer to this, and it is tremendously solemn: the final decision of such a dispute is reserved for that day which shall try every man's work, of what sort it is—"Judge nothing before the time—until the Lord come, who shall bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the secrets of the heart." Whatever may be apparently irreconcilable, one thing is certain, we must not make the dispensation of infinite wisdom responsible for the consequences of human unbelief—"Let God be true, but every man a liar." We contend for a principle which puts honour on the Word of God, and honour on the work of the Holy Spirit—which exhibits the mystery of godliness as indeed a

great mystery, and exalts the religion of Jesus as something infinitely above nature's reach, making true godliness the effect of the independent operation of Almighty God—His workmanship a new creation, wherein the old nature is eradicated, and a new nature implanted, even to the very root from which "all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, do proceed."

We have an illustration in the contrasted penitence of two Apostles: their apostolic privileges did not preserve the one from betraying, the other from denying, his Master. We doubt not, that after Judas cast down the silver in the temple, his mourning was more vehement than that of Peter, when, after his Master looked on him, "he went out and wept bitterly;" and that the agonising reflections of Judas were more intense than those of Peter—and yet Judas was a cast away, and Peter was finally and for ever reinstated in the favour of his Lord. Where lay the difference, but in the inward character? The penitence of one was the gift of God—that of the other was the product of natural feeling; the sorrow of the one was a Godly sorrow—that of the other the sorrow of the world, working death: one was a plant, planted by the Father, and which stood the most

winnowing temptation when Satan sifted him like wheat—the other had but an external connexion with the Church, and was rooted up. Oh! these things are written for our learning, and they are written for our admonition; that we should examine ourselves, and see what is the ground of our hope—whether the Gospel has come to us in power, or in word only—whether our faith stands in the power of God, or in the wisdom of man. They are designed to lead us, child-like, to the feet of the great Prophet, and to pray, "Lord, what I know not, teach thou me!"

Oh! that the Holy Spirit may vouchsafe to make Christ this hour a savour of life to many! May Jesus lift up the heart for the outpouring of his wisdom, power and holiness; for it is only the Spirit of the Lord God on a preached Christ, that can bring to the sinner's heart the blessings of the glorious Gospel, in all their felt and apprehended reality—"good tidings to the meek, liberty to the captive, opening of the prison to them that are bound;—giving beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified." Amen.

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OR

## GOSPEL PREACHER.

"We preach Christ crucified—

"Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God."—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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REV. WILLIAM DIGBY.

REV. JOSEPH BAYLEE.

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THE ALL-SUFFICIENCY OF THE SCRIPTURE.

### A SERMON

BY THE REV. WILLIAM DIGBY, A. M.,

Rector of Templeton, Diocese of Ardagh.

2 TIMOTHY iii. part of 16th verse.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

"ALL Scripture is divinely inspired." So says our text, itself forming a part of that heavenly document, which, if it has man for its *editor*, has God Himself for its *author*—its *sole author*.

Let us consider what the text asserts. "All Scripture is divinely inspired"—it is the word of God, communicated by the breath of God, that is, by the Holy Ghost, to those holy men of old whom he has selected and separated from their mother's womb to be his amanuenses, or inspired penmen. Such were Moses and the prophets; and such were the apostles and evangelists of the New Testament. They were all men whose private mind was wholly unable to supply them with either the *matter* or the *words* which they were directed to bring forth; who wrote therefore, not by their own will, or by the will of man, but as they were *moved* or compelled, as it were, by the Holy Ghost. This is the testimony of St. Peter, in harmony with our text—see his 2nd Epistle, i. 21.

This honor is claimed for "*all Scripture*." Now, as to the Scriptures of the  
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Old Testament, we may safely consult the Jews to know what books did, and what did not belong to its canon. They were for the time then being, the appointed witnesses and keepers of "the oracles of God." This duty they performed with the utmost care and fidelity—their care extended to their numbering the very words, and marking *that* word which stood in the middle of each book. And the number of the books corresponded to the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet, being twenty-two. Our Lord indeed taxes them, and taxes them most heavily, with misunderstanding and misinterpreting those lively oracles in which they thought they had eternal life, but never with having been unfaithful as witnesses and keepers of them. They made the word of God void, indeed, through their traditions; yea, they believed neither Moses nor their own prophets, which were read in their synagogues every Sabbath-day; but still the witness of Moses and of the prophets remained unto the Christian era, uncorrupted by them, presenting to the eyes and the ears of the Jewish



people a correct *fac simile* of the original autographs of inspiration.

To this fact our Lord himself bears testimony when, in that memorable saying of his to the disciples after his resurrection, he referred to the well-known three-fold distribution of the Old Testament into the law, the prophets, and the psalms, which every Hebrew Bible still preserves, and called the whole, comprehending these twenty-two books, and excluding the whole of the Apocrypha, by the sacred name of the Scriptures, or writings which testified of Him. We need go no further than this, to ascertain the canon, or to prove the inspiration of the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

And for proof that they have come down to us, *since* the invention of the art of printing, in the main as uncorrupt as they were in the hands of the Jews at the commencement of the Christian era, it may be mentioned, that after Doctor Kennicott had taken the greatest pains to collect and collate such a multiplicity and variety of ancient manuscript copies of the Hebrew Scriptures, as are noted in his printed Hebrew Bible, he was charged (very unjustly indeed) with having accomplished almost nothing!—so small and so very trifling were the discrepancies between one copy or *codex* and another.

Now, for the Scriptures of the New Testament, which equally deserve that sacred name of divinely inspired writings with the old, and of which the *Christian Church* is the appointed keeper and witness; I will observe, that, like her Jewish predecessor, she has been most unfaithful in the interpretation of these books; she too has made void the gospel of Christ, by the traditions of her elders, but she did not, for indeed she could not, corrupt those writings themselves.

They fell into too many hands from the moment they were edited, to admit of being corrupted, and the different parties into which the church, from the beginning was split, exercised too close and scrutinizing a watch upon the proceedings of the other, not to detect and expose the attempt, whenever, or by whomsoever it might be made—and thus, out of divisions in the Church, which in themselves are evil, a wonder-working providence educes this great good. In fact, the attempt was beset with so many difficulties, that it does not seem to have been made at all; and the correspondence, upon the whole, of *codices* of the New Testament, col-

lected after the commencement of the revival of letters, which preceded the reformation, from all parts of the world, confirms this fact—that we have a Greek Testament now, which mainly exhibits a faithful transcript of the autographs of the writers of the respective books composing the canon of the New Testament.

And the canon is itself determined for us by no fallible church authority; but by the fact which was known, at the first, to the particular churches to whom the several portions of the New Testament were severally addressed, being communicated by degrees, from one to the other, until it became a matter of universal notoriety, that the several detached parts of the New Testament be they a Gospel, or an epistle, or the acts, or lastly, the apocalypse, were really written by the men whose names they bear, and that these men were *inspired*. So that the doubt of some churches for a time respecting the canonical character of certain portions of the New Testament, (as the 2nd Peter, the Hebrews, that of James, and lastly, of the Apocalypse,) issued, (like the incredulity of Thomas, respecting the resurrection of the Lord,) in a greater—amounting to an absolute certainty, and only proved the extreme caution of the early church, in receiving anything for the word of God, which once so received, is for ever after to be held sacred. For if the doubts of any churches upon such a subject, in the primitive times, were forced in time to give way to evidence, there remains for us, brethren, now, no room or liberty to doubt.

When we contend for the inspiration of Scripture, (or rather, when the Scripture itself asserts its own inspiration), it is a *verbal* inspiration that is contended for. The words are the words of God, and the writing is the writing of God, as truly as was the law.

When God will vouchsafe a revelation to mankind, he reveals himself by *words*, he gives ideas by giving words, used according to their well-known signification. Man thinks in words; the association between words and ideas he cannot break—and ideas detached from words presently become a mass of confusion, and vanish into air. Is it not so, brethren? Try to think, for a moment, without words, and you will experience the truth of my position—you will not be able to think at all. Fitly, then, was the new dispensation introduced with a gift of tongues—not

the senseless jargon of Irvingism, but with the power, by inspiration, given to those assembled with the apostles, fitly to speak in all the languages of the then known world, "the wonderful works of God."

It was not that God did a part, and man the rest (according to a too common, but most mistaken and dangerous idea,) it was not that God gave ideas, and then man clothed them with words as he best could: but in one sense God did all, and in another sense man did all: "God gave the *word* and great was the company of the preachers." God *worked* in giving the word, and man *acted* in speaking or writing, infallibly and exactly that word. So that it is truly and at the same time, both the word of God, and the writing in his own proper style, of the individual whom the Holy Ghost was pleased to employ as an instrument.

Thus it is a pipe or a harp that utters its own proper and peculiar sound, while it is the player upon that pipe or harp, that gives the distinction or meaning of the sound. The epistles of Paul, of James, of Peter, and of John, and all the other integral parts of the Bible, are each written in the style peculiar to their respective Scribes or writers, so that they may be plainly perceived to be *theirs*, and thus their *genuineness* may be manifested in contradistinction to various productions that might be sent forth under their names, while the whole is the word of God written, or the word dictated by the Spirit of God. So says St. Paul to the Corinthians, "we speak not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

Hence appears the utter impossibility of our receiving any of the alleged traditions of the church, as a part or parcel of the rule of our Christian belief, or necessary Christian obedience. For even if the subject matter of these traditions were more clearly developed, discovered, or "*recovered*," than it is—even if from a more laborious perusal of the ponderous and musty writings of the so-called fathers of the church, (a labour and weariness to the flesh, truly this would be) something in the shape of a doctrine could be elicited, more exactly and tangibly than we have yet heard: still, would this be a revelation, *in words*, of the will of God? would it be, like all the Scriptures, a *verbal* communication from Him? a divinely inspired writing? No—by no means. It would be nothing of this

character. It would be a statement *in the words of man*, confessedly "in words which man's wisdom teacheth," of something, which in another form or manner, is alleged upon hearsay, and long before, to have been taught to the church by apostles or apostolic men, who handed it down unwritten to their successors in office, as a part at least of the deposit of the faith which they taught, but which unaccountably has been left unrecorded in Holy Scripture!

Now what *divine faith* can we repose in these religious *stories*? We can place none. They are presumptuous *additions* to the word of God; in their character totally incongruous to that word. In it we may repose a certain faith, and "know the certainty of those things in which we have been (by the church) instructed." For faith is not an opinion but a certainty. Being founded on facts, (all the articles of the apostles' creed are *facts*) it "is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen." And the miracles recorded in the Bible are a divine seal to the doctrines therein taught. But they are, or can be no seal to unwritten traditions never so much as alluded to in the Bible, except with a solemn caution against our receiving them. It is impossible so to seal these fugitive reports, as the Scripture doctrine is sealed. When I am required to adopt a sentiment or a practice in religion, as necessary to my salvation upon the plea of tradition, I demand to have that tradition delivered and proved to me, to be a revelation from God in the *very words* of God himself, spoken to one of his known and recognised prophets. If this can not be done (and it never can be done,) then I say, away with it. According to the law these teachers of fables were to be put to death—according to the gospel they are carefully to be avoided—as Paul says to Timothy, "from such turn thou away."

Now, brethren, the fundamental error of the Church of Rome consists in her placing these unwritten traditions upon a level with the written word of God. She admits with us, the Scriptures to be the word of God, but she adds "not the whole word of God." For there is, she says, also a word of God unwritten, to wit, the traditions of the church. And having laid down this false principle, (oh! brethren it is a perilous downfall to err in *principle*,) then her doctors have advanced from one monstrous impiety to

another, speaking lies (under pretence of their being these very traditions,) in hypocrisy, having their consciences cauterised, teaching doctrines of demon, that is, devil mediators, "for there is no mediator between God and man but the man Christ Jesus," and who ever pretends to such an office is not a saint of God, nor a holy angel, but an impure devil, personating and foully abusing the name of that saint or angel,) whereunto they add, that it might be impossible to mistake them, "forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth."

Now, brethren, it would be impossible with any success, to broach these impieties among the protestant and church going populations of these islands, (once so happily reformed) by the direct and visible instrumentality of the professors or ministers of the apostate Communion of Rome. And this the devil well knows; he knows that the open attack would but create an alarm in our camp, and perhaps a re-action that would only retard or defeat his object, which is to seduce Protestant Britain once more, and involve her in the approaching ruin of the Catholic apostacy, when great Babylon, together with all her helpers, shall sink down into the abyss of liquid fire in the centre of the earth. For let it never be forgotten, that the grand object of the devil is to procure the damnation of as many human souls as possible.

Therefore the devil takes another method conformably to his character of subtlety. First of all, and to prepare the way, he raises up good but mistaken men, to impugn and call in question in our day, the Protestant interpretation of prophecy respecting the papacy, and boldly to deny what the reformers unanimously and to their last gasp maintained, that as Jesus is the Christ, so the Pope is *the* Antichrist, or man of sin, whom, (because as Luther well observed, he deserves no gentler judgment) the Lord Jesus shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and destroy by the brightness of his second coming.

After this preparatory hurtful impression has been made upon men's minds, (and it is now made,) that the reformers here went too far and were mistaken: then the devil's next step is to raise up in the bosom of our church and in our seats of learning, (and principally at *Oxford*, as the most celebrated of our Universities,

founded by the good King Alfred,) as apostles of tradition, a body of men distinguished by talents and learning, of pious and blameless manners—men of mortified habits, ascetic in their way of living, and clothed (in externals at least,) with the appearance of ministers of righteousness. As *individuals* I do not judge them, to their own master let them stand or fall. But if they be men of piety, however mistaken, they are only the fitter for this his work, who never shows himself to men in the blackness of his real character, but, (as St. Paul says to the Corinthians,) "is transformed into an angel of light." Let it not seem strange to any of you, that a good man ever should be found doing a work of the devil. Remember that it was once said unto Peter, by him who at the same time well knew Peter's real character, aye, and had just before pronounced him blessed—"get thee behind me Satan, thou art an offence to me, for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."

And what are these men doing? Why, as Protestant divines, they are attacking the grand principle of Protestantism, which is the sufficiency of Holy Scripture, and introducing among us once more, the worst of all the errors of popery, and that which is the prolific mother of all her other abominations, a respect for the traditions of antiquity. They are denying the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures to make a man "wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Jesus Christ;" and sending us to the writings of *men* to discover, or to recover as some of them say, the long lost deposit of the faith, which according to them, the Scriptures do not, (perfectly at least) contain, nor were they intended to teach. They speak great swelling words of vanity, about apostolic succession, (coming to us through the most corrupt channel, observe, of the Popes of Rome,) about episcopal grace, about life *giving* sacraments, and for proof of all this, they send us not to Scripture but tradition, and the voluminous works of the Christian Fathers!

But, brethren, what were these Fathers, most of whom lived in ages of deep superstition, and were deeply tainted by it—what were they but *children* in comparison with the *men* whom God raised up at a later period to reform his church? And what is the so called antiquity of the church, but its real infancy. Let antiquity have its due praise; but this the



truth concerning it—the church was then but young. And so we speak of the primitive church as the *infant* church, which indeed saw some things clearly as we do; but we, standing upon their shoulders, have made progress, and do see more. The “Article of a standing or falling church” is justification by faith, (a tenet which the Oxford divines, who are now troubling us, hold by no means clearly, if indeed they can be said to hold it at all) and upon this all-important subject there is more of sound and instructive divinity in one page of Luther’s writings, than in all the volumes of the fathers put together.

These men admit with us, in words, the inspiration of the Scriptures; but then, against the articles of religion received amongst us, and their own ordination vows, they deny their *all-sufficiency*. Now the question is, can any man really hold sound views respecting the inspiration—the *verbal* inspiration of the Scriptures, and at the same time deny their sufficiency for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness? I think it is *impossible*. No man can really hold the *verbal* inspiration of the Bible (without which it is not the *word* of God, properly speaking, at all) and at the same time, place in juxtaposition with it, and as possessing the same authority over our consciences, those vague, or hearsay traditions, concerning doctrines which have been above alluded to. Whether these alleged *rumours* of doctrines, I say, be reconcilable, in any degree, with God’s word written, or be irreconcilable (as generally is the case) opposed to the same, it matters not; the divinely inspired writing, and what is never alleged to have been delivered in a form of *words*, which words are not exactly preserved at all, never can be placed upon the same level, or admitted as possessing a co-ordinate authority with it over our consciences.

I suspect, then, that the ideas of these modern sticklers for tradition, who have arisen in the university of Oxford, will be found to resolve themselves into something very loose and vague, and tending at last to infidelity itself. I say not that they are at heart infidels, no more than papists; but their notions tend to both one and the other of these evils. They would first have us to believe too much, and they would end, by leaving us believing nothing at all. This the devil well knows.

Neither would I consent to these men,

that tradition, or the works of the ancient ecclesiastical writers, were necessary, or very helpful to explain to us, or *interpret* the Scriptures. In general, the fathers are poor expositors of the sacred text—this is a fact well known to all sound Biblical scholars. The gold is thinly interspersed with much mere rubbish—a thousand vain and foolish origenic fancies, for one sound Christian sentiment simply and sensibly expressed. Herein there is a striking contrast between the works of the fathers and of the reformers.

But the best, and indeed the *ONLY* INTERPRETER of inspired Scripture is ITS OWN DIVINE AUTHOR. When he will speak to man, he will speak so as to be understood, and to need no intervening interpreter. To demand, or to bow to any *interpreter* of the voice of the Lord among fallible human beings—call it the church, or whatever else you please—is already to depart from the faith, and to take the first step that leads at last to Popery. The church is “a witness and keeper of the Holy Scripture,” but not the judge of Holy Scripture—on the contrary, Holy Scripture judges her.

The church has a certain authority or weight in *controversies* of faith; but to the faith itself not only the church, but the angels in heaven are subjected. “Call no man master upon earth,” for no man has dominion over your faith, which stands, not in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God. God’s plain word, and it alone, gives the certainty of faith. We prove our doctrine, in our books and sermons, by Scripture—the Scripture then is our interpreter, not we its. Outwardly, the word, and the word alone, interprets itself—so that what is darkly spoken in one place, is more clearly spoken in another; and inwardly, the only interpreter of the mind of God in the Scriptures, is the Spirit of God, or the Holy Ghost, who, by the entrance of that word giveth light and understanding unto the simple, revealing to them the simple and literal meaning of Scripture, to be generally the truest and best; so that they become wiser than their teachers; and being possessed of “the *unction* that is truth and no lie,” they have no need that any man teach them—“For he that is spiritual judgeth all things, and he himself is judged of no man.”

Here, then, with all their learning, and ability, and devoutness, and strictness, and blameless morals, none of which it is our object or wish to deny (for we would wrong no man), we apprehend that these



"Oxford divines" (as for distinction's sake we must call them), will be found sadly, if not entirely wanting. They want divine teaching, connected, as it ever is, with that inward humility of soul, which alone can make Christ and his true doctrines precious; they want evangelical experience; they have never been in the deeps; they have never cried from thence, "Save, Lord, or I perish!" Living in the quiet of a collegiate life, they are unacquainted with spiritual conflicts and temptations; and therefore they have no savour, or spiritual perception of truth. This is the rule for trying the spirits, which the vigorous christian intellect of Luther once suggested to the more cautious and timidly conscientious mind of Melancthon, with reference to the fantastical Anabaptists, who were then troubling Germany, and with whose extravagant pretensions the latter felt himself puzzled and confounded. "Ask them," says Luther, "were they ever in the deeps;" and he concludes by reminding his friend, "that we are not to believe even a *glorified* Jesus, unless he was first *crucified*."

Let Dr. Pusey, Mr. Newman, Keeble, (the author of the *Christian Year*) and Co. be weighed in these balances; and, casting into the scale all their erudition, and all their real moral excellence, be it what it may—aye, were they very angels from heaven—and we have no doubt that they will be found to kick the beam.

Let us conclude with a practical and close application of this important subject, the *fact* that all Scripture is divinely inspired, to ourselves. And may the Spirit, who breathed that word once, breathe now upon us, making the same to come to us in power, and in much assurance, and experimentally to know how profitable it is for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, that the child of God, who is of that word born again, may be perfected, and thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work.

Oppressed by real evils, brethren, which are all the effects of sin, and by sin, which is itself the greatest of them all—and with death, its wages—and an undone eternity, which that death naturally involves, spread before us, we want a *real* religion—a "substance of things hoped for, an evidence of things not seen"—to elevate us from our ruin, and to sustain us. Such a religion we have in the Bible; for they have not followed cunningly devised fables, who have preached

unto us this Gospel at the first; for they were eye-witnesses of the majesty of Him, who once was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of that death, whereby he became our almighty Saviour.

Our faith is founded in facts, the imperishable record of which is contained in the *inspired* Scriptures—a record, against the existence of which, both in pagan and papal times, the utmost fury of the great red dragon has been directed; yet he has not succeeded, and never shall. The church of Christ, how many unworthy traditions soever she may contain in her outward communion, never has betrayed altogether this sacred trust or deposit, and she never will. It remains written with us, as with a pen of iron and lead in the rock for ever—as it is written, "the word of the Lord abideth for ever; and this is the word, which by the Gospel is preached unto us."

"He, then, that believeth hath the witness in himself—and this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life." Brethren, we want the authority of a certain warrant from God for all that we believe, and all that we do. Without this we are wretched—without this our intellect is amazed with endless doubt, and our energy paralysed by the same. We cannot serve an unknown God—we cannot in ignorance find in ourselves either strength to suffer (as we *must*), or a will to serve (as we ought), even if we would. Without a *written* revelation from God (now that there are no more inspired living prophets in the world) we cannot run the road of wisdom—we cannot overcome the fear of death, or endure the thought of our immortal spirit returning to God who gave it.

But "all Scripture is divinely inspired." And this Scripture among the rest, that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And this again, "It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." And this again, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins." Here, then, we can plant our foot securely. We know whom we have believed, and that what he has promised he is able to perform. And "this is our righteousness" before him, that we

count him faithful that has promised, as did our father in the faith, the patriarch Abraham. We are then upon the *rock*. We can then lift up our hearts; yes, "let us lift them up unto the Lord—let us give thanks unto our Lord God; it is meet and right so to do—it is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, to give thanks unto thee, O Lord God—heavenly Father—Almighty, Everlasting God; therefore with angels, and arch angels, and all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory—glory be to thee, O Lord, most high!"

Perhaps, I address some—perhaps, more than a few, in this assembly, who have never yet experienced the power of the divinely inspired Word; that is, the religion of the Bible, in their own souls. I must speak a word to these: for they have their portion, too, to be given them in due season. God grant, that *that* season may be *now*.

Perhaps, the cause why *you* have never yet felt, as Christians do feel; why you have never yet felt the power of godliness, and have therefore nothing but its form, is, that this *fact* of all Scripture being given by inspiration of God, so that to read the Bible is to read the *ipsissima verba*, the very words of the Lord God himself, there speaking to us from heaven, has never been brought duly before you, or duly considered by you. Hence, when you read, or hear the Bible read, you read it not, nor hear it read, with reverence or fixed attention; you know it not as yet, as "the law of the Lord," that you should have your "delight in it, and meditate therein by day and by night"; and hence you despise it, as containing, perhaps, like the Mahometan Koran, or the Hindoo Shasters, a mixture of truth and falsehood, of *fact* and of *fact*.

And when you hear sermons—faithful sermons—preached by faithful men, (not a few of whom are, blessed be God, now to be found,) you regard the *matter* as well as the *manner* of the preacher, as a subject for sceptical and scoffing criticism, perhaps for profane and indecent ridicule. The warmth of Christians you account fanaticism: you can tolerate any other enthusiasm but theirs.

Then we advise you, and we pray you this day to consider what has been spoken; and to reflect that the written word, whereof we are only witnesses, is *inspired*; "he therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God," and he shall answer accordingly before Him, who now standeth ready to judge the quick and dead.

Believe, O! believe in *our* Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, as well as we. Why not?—"come with us, and we will do thee good." "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,"—But perhaps, I may speak here to some in a still more dangerous state, who know well that the Scriptures are divinely inspired, and that Christians are in the right way; and yet they are not themselves persuaded to come to Christ that they may have life, nor to yield themselves to the sweet violence of his constraining love.

Your case is most dangerous, I am bound to tell you plainly; for you stand on the very verge of sinning against the Holy Ghost. Beware of doing despite to the Spirit of Grace any longer. He will not *always* strive with man now, no more than before the flood. There is such a thing as a hardening influence from God, upon such "as receive not the love of the truth that they might be saved: a spirit of drunkenness—not with wine, but with the fury of the Lord, the intoxicating effect of which no sleep shall remove—"a strong delusion to believe a lie, to the end that they all may be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

Your case is dangerous—aye, desperately so: yet do not *despair*—that *were indeed to sin against the Holy Ghost*, for yet there is a remedy for you—even for you. And behold it is here—"it is nigh unto you, in your mouth and in your heart, that if ye shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God hath raised him from the dead, you shall be saved." Amen. May he that willet not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live, now grant you repentance unto the acknowledging of the truth, and that you may recover yourselves from the snare of the devil, who have been captivated by him at his will.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

## A SERMON

PREACHED IN SANTRY CHURCH, DIOCESE OF DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY, 9TH JUNE, 1839,

BY THE REV. JOSEPH BAYLEE, A.B.,

ST. LUKE xxii. 19.

"This do in remembrance of me."

THE Lord's Supper is the most affecting, as well as one of the most important ordinances of the Christian religion. The apostle speaks of it in such terms as have kept many persons from observing it, from false views of his meaning—"He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." It is an ordinance which, rightly viewed, is full of importance and blessed instruction to the souls of sinners who believe in Jesus. Its importance results from its being a channel of blessing, and also from the declaration we make in it of what we are, and what we believe we shall be, what our faith is in this life present, and what our hope is in the life to come.

If we consider the circumstances under which our Lord spoke the words of our text, we shall see in them much of important and blessed realities, well calculated to enlighten our understandings, warm our affections, and guide our feet in the way of peace.

With a body worn down by fatigue and anxiety, so that he could say "I am poured out like water, all my bones are out of joint," a countenance "marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men"—with a mind harrassed by the multitudinous events of the preceding week—sensibilities that were wounded by the neglect of those whom he came to serve—"refuge failed me and no man

cared for my soul,"—with feelings like our own, which naturally shrunk from a painful death, constraining him to say,— "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me,"—with moral sympathies which were wounded by the treachery of one of his disciples, and by the selfishness of all—"it was not an enemy that reproached, then I could have borne it,"—in retirement from the world, in the seclusion of an upper chamber, surrounded by the disciples whom he loved, himself a living exhibition of divine love, and of humanity made perfect, the Saviour, taking bread and wine, and blessing them, left his dying charge in those few but impressive words—"This do in remembrance of me."

From these words we shall consider :

1. *The institution of the Lord's Supper.*

2. *The purpose of it.*

3. *The persons who ought to partake of it.*

4. *Lastly, the duty of observing it.*

1. THE INSTITUTION OF THIS HOLY RITE. "This do,"—that is, do what I am doing. To do what Jesus did we are to take bread and wine. "The Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it and said, Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you, this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup,

when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me."

We are to take bread and wine, not for an ordinary meal, for they "had supped" and the apostle says "if any man hunger, let him eat at home,"—but for a sacramental feast, a means of feeding in our souls upon the body and blood of Christ our Saviour. Nor was it for the worship of the elements, for he did not command them to make an image of the bread, nor do we read of any elevation of either it or the cup, or of any prostration before them—it was, as we have said, a sacramental feast, which the Lord instituted when he said, "This do in remembrance of me." Again, if we would do what Jesus did, we must, before we eat that bread and drink that wine, have them consecrated. In Matthew xxvi. 26. the evangelist informs us that Jesus took bread, and *blessed* it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said "This is my body." In 1 Cor. x. 16. the apostle notices this as of permanent observance—"The cup of blessing *which we bless*, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ." He thus teaches us, that it is bread and wine blessed or consecrated, that is, solemnly set apart for the Lord's service, as a memorial of his dying love, and a means of partaking of the body and blood of Christ.

It has the Lord's name inscribed upon it—"This is my body, this is my blood." It is sacramentally his body and blood; not really, but as "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace," for after the consecration, it is called "bread," and "the fruit of the vine."

Yet it is not common but consecrated bread and wine. They have undergone a consecration similar to that which took place in the Jewish temple, when the shew bread was solemnly set before the Lord and eaten, not by the common people, but by the Lord's priests, and by them only in the Lord's house. It is in this Scripture view of the subject, that our rubric commands that the consecrated elements shall not be carried out of the church, "but the priest, and such other of the communicants as he shall then call unto him, shall, immediately after the blessing, reverently eat and drink the same." We find this consecration of certain matters to God taught us, both in

the Old and New Testament. In Exodus xiii. 12, 13, we see, that the first-born peculiarly belonged to the Lord. In one sense, "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof,"—but there is a peculiar sense in which the Lord challenges some things in the world for his own,—“Thou shalt set apart unto the Lord all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast, the males shall be the Lord's. And every firstling of an ass, thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck, and all the first-born of man among thy children shalt thou redeem.” Here we see the consecration of the first-born to the Lord, as his peculiar property.

There is an interesting circumstance connected with it—the redemption of an unclean beast by a clean, pointing to the redemption of the unclean sinner by a clean offering, “the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.” In Leviticus xxiv. 9, we have the consecration of food to the Lord and to his priests, where the shew bread is commanded to be eaten by none but priests, to be consecrated in the Lord's house, and eaten alone in the holy place. In the New Testament our Lord recognises the same principle as belonging to the things that are set apart to the Lord. In St. Mark xi. we read, that he went into the temple, cleansed it, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves; adding, as his reason, these remarkable words, (as the margin renders it,) “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations,” thus teaching us, that when consecrated to the Lord's service, it is his, and not ours. Any thing once given to the Lord, cannot be used for purposes otherwise lawful, for merchandize, or any thing but for the Lord's service.

Here then, we see, that when Jesus said, “Do this,” he taught us to take bread and wine, and solemnly to consecrate them.

Next, we are to have a minister to consecrate them. We do not find that any disciples meeting together could consecrate the elements, for in Matthew we are told, that “Jesus blessed it and brake it, and *then* gave it to the disciples and said, take, eat, this is my body.” In Acts, ii. 42, we find the same ministerial



consecration of the Lord's Supper, where we are told, that those who were baptized, "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers," that is, they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and communion, and in the apostles' breaking of bread and prayers—whatever their public services were, they had the apostles, the Lord's ministers with them. And thus it is as the apostle says, the cup of blessing which we bless, becomes the communion of the blood of Christ.

Again we find, that in doing this, our Lord accompanied it with prayer. We have a beautiful and instructive portion of that prayer recorded in the 17th chapter of St. John's gospel. We find he accompanied it with hymns, for we are informed by the evangelist, "when they had sung an hymn, they went unto the Mount of Olives." He accompanied it with a most instructive sermon—the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth chapters of St. John, are the sermon which he preached at the institution of his own supper. There are other matters connected with doing this that Jesus did, such as time and place, and order of prayer and posture, and such like, and these are left to the discretion of the lawful authority in the church. The xi. of Corinthians which gives such important directions respecting the observance of this ordinance concludes by saying, "the rest will I set in order when I come." The apostle had delivered some things as the fixed institution of the Lord's supper—they were to take bread and wine which were to be blessed, they were to tarry one for another, &c. but he implies that the minutest regulations respecting it, were to be regulated by lawful authority, "the rest will I set in order when I come." This power of setting in order the details of Christian worship and Christian ordinances is committed to the bishops, as we find in Titus i. 5. "for this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting," not that thou shouldest make inventions of men in the worship of God, but that thou shouldest regulate those things which God has left to thy discretion. We thus find that the details of Christian worship were to be regulated not by popular clamour or popular will, but that the presiding minister in the Lord's church should have the regulation

of matters such as these. We now come to—

II. THE PURPOSE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, "do this in remembrance of me," in remembrance of Jesus. The apostle says, "the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread." Oh, how should this remind us of Jesus? The night in which he was betrayed, the night in which sinful men betrayed the Saviour—the night in which the Saviour was content to be delivered up into the hands of sinful men—the night that exhibited in one view the blackness of human depravity, and the brightness of the Saviour's love—the night that proved in the face of angels and men, the constant unchanging love of him, who forgot not his disciples in their waywardness and ingratitude, in their forgetfulness and renunciation of him—the night that reminds us that Jesus does not forget us, however we may forget him!

The remembrance of Jesus may be considered actively or passively, "this do in remembrance of me," that is to remind Jesus of us, or to remind us of Jesus. The expression may be applied both ways, and may be profitably considered in either view. We have need of reminding Christ of us, of our necessities, our wants, our joys, and our sorrows, as in Isaiah xliii. 26, "put me in remembrance, let us plead together, declare thou, that thou mayest be justified, I, even I, am he, that blot-teth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Here we have indeed a bleeding Saviour exhibiting himself to us as blotting out our transgressions, and because he will not remember our sins, encouraging us to put him in remembrance of us, in remembrance of all we need at his Almighty hand. In Numbers x. 9, we have the same truth of reminding God of us, set before the Jews, "if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets, and ye shall be remembered before the Lord your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies." Here then, in the day of danger, were the people with appointed trumpets, putting the Lord in remembrance of them, of their dangers and necessities, and by thus putting the Lord in remembrance of them, obtaining the help they needed,— "ye shall be saved from your enemies:" and so again, in Malachi iii. 16, 17, we

are told that "they who feared the Lord, spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name; and they shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

In this view of these words, we have then this truth set before us, that, in that holy ordinance, we remind Jesus of his covenanted mercy, of his dying love, the price it cost Christ to purchase our souls, the greatness of his promises, the reality and truth of our faith in him, the necessity we have to bring before him our weakness and our woes. We remind him that we do indeed believe in him, and that, believing in him, we cling to his precious covenant. In taking of the memorials of his dying love, we remind him that we are those of whom he has said, "he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die."

But again, the remembrance of Jesus, taken passively, implies that we remember Jesus; our remembrance of Jesus implies, not merely a remembrance of one act of the Saviour, of one truth, or one fact connected with his Gospel or his life, but a remembrance of himself. He does not say, do it in remembrance of the cross—do it in remembrance of the garden, but, do it in remembrance of *me*—my person—my offices—my qualities—my whole being—Christ Jesus our Redeemer—our friend. Remembrance of Jesus must vary in intensity, and affection, and character, in proportion to our knowledge of his love, his grace, his kindness, and his truth, and of our habitual abiding in him in our own souls. What would the remembrance of Jesus imply to the apostles? How manifold the recollections that would crowd into their minds, when they remembered Jesus! How various the emotions that would be excited within them, when they assembled at his table, in remembrance of him! The remembrance of Jesus to them would be the remembrance of the companion, whose intimacy they had enjoyed through the whole period of his ministry; seeing him in his most secret hours—in his private intercourse—in his

public character. Going in and out with them, they had become acquainted with the emotions of his heart, with the thoughts of his mind, with all his words, and actions, and works. They would remember him, who spoke as never man spoke—the friend that bore with their waywardness, instructed their ignorance, enlightened their darkness, had forgiven their ingratitude, had corrected their selfishness, and fulfilled in every respect that most endearing relation. They would remember the prophet, who predicted his country's ruin, and forewarned his countrymen of their impending danger, setting before the mind of his church, the great events that were to happen in it. They would remember the true patriot, who was not seeking the applause of the giddy multitude, who, while he mourned over, rebuked the sins of his people, who pointed out to his nation their danger, as well as to the house of Judah, their sins; the teacher who set himself against popular prejudices, while he meekly bore with popular waywardness; the churchman who was scrupulously submissive to all the ordinances of divine appointment, while he was faithful in testimony against the corruptions of that priesthood, whose office he recognized, and to whose authority he submitted; the preacher of the Gospel to the poor—the binder of the broken hearted—the giver of sight to the blind—the announcer of mercy to the sinner; they would remember him, in whom they saw fulfilled all the relations of life—his conduct, as a guest, when he sat in the house of the pharisee, recognizing the poor penitent, one who "came and washed his feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head," acknowledging her love, and accepting her gratitude, while he rebuked the proud and haughty, and rich one, in whose house he was at the time. They would remember the wondrous worker of miracles, who was seeking, not his own glory, but the glory of him that sent him; who was compassionate to the weak, pardoning the sinner, raising the dead, unmindful of himself, and attending only to the glory of God, and the good of souls. Could they remember Jesus, and forget his dying love? Could they forget the garden of Gethsemane, where they had seen their beloved Master in his hour of agony? Could they forget the place of a skull, where he was nailed to the accursed tree?

Could they forget the drops of blood that flowed from him, when the weight of the world's sins and woe was upon him—the agony of mind and body, in which they saw him prostrate? Could they forget the fervency of prayer in which he supplicated the assistance and presence of his God and their God, his Father and their Father? Could they forget the submissive prayer, by which he bowed his own will to the divine will, saying “nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done?” Could they forget the gentle rebuke, with which he reminded Peter of his former self-dependance—“couldst thou not watch with me one hour?” Could they forget the care of his disciples, when in the midst of his own distress, he sought their safety saying, “let these go their way?” Could they forget his discourse at the last supper, when they remembered Jesus, when they thought of that countenance full of sorrow and love which they saw before them, and heard his words, “let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid;” forgetting himself and thinking of them, encouraging them, and encouraging us to the latest posterity, to put their trust and faith in him? Could they remember Jesus, and forget his cross? Could they forget the sympathy that he felt for the daughters of Jerusalem, accepting their love, and reminding them of their own suffering, “daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children?” Could they forget the filial sympathy that he exhibited to his sorrowing mother, when he committed her to the care of his beloved disciple? Could they forget the scoffs he endured when spit upon, and crowned with thorns? Could they forget the scenes their eyes witnessed, when the penitent thief had said to him, “Lord, remember me when thou comest to thy kingdom?” Could they forget the acceptance which their master gave to that penitent sinner, “this day shalt thou be with me in paradise?” Or could they forget, as he was about to leave the world, his last prayer, “Father into thy hand I commend my spirit?” Such would be part of the feelings that would occupy their minds, when they heard the words addressed to them, “do this in remembrance of me.”

Could they remember his dying love, and doubt the reality of his atonement? Could they remember his personal affec-

tion for themselves individually, and doubt whether they themselves were accepted, and their salvation secured by him? This remembrance of Jesus would bring home to their bosoms the assurance that their sins were pardoned, that their souls were saved, that, having been blessed with the love of him, who is “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;”—his love is an unchangeable love, and therefore their safety is endless security. Could they remember his dying love, and doubt his living affection? They had seen him crucified through weakness, and raised by the power of God;—they had heard him say, “I go to prepare a place for you;” Could they in after life, doubt their own adoption? Could they suppose that he would have gone to prepare a place for them, and not secure the preparation of them for the place? Could they doubt, that he who had so often, when alive, forgiven their sins and ingratitude, would continue to forgive them still? Could they doubt, that he was their shepherd who would follow them with goodness and mercy all the days of their life; and, notwithstanding all their failings, sins, and infirmities, would cause them to dwell in the house of the Lord for ever? They who had seen the blood of the eternal covenant shed, could not remember Jesus, without being assured that he became the shepherd of the sheep—they could not forget, that he was now appearing in the presence of God for them—securing their safety, pleading their cause, and while he owned their sins, and acknowledged their sinfulness, could present the merits of his own blood, and obtain eternal redemption for them.—Heb. xiii. 20. My brethren, could they remember Jesus, and forget themselves? Could they forget the contrast between his character and theirs, that flashed so constantly on their minds? Could they not say, as one of old did, “Mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes?” They would thus, indeed, be powerfully reminded when they remembered Jesus, of their own sinfulness, their own selfishness, their waywardness, their ingratitude, their own tendency to go astray, like lost sheep; and, remembering Jesus, they would cast themselves into the arms of his love, and with the deepest humiliation and the most repentant feelings, they would entrust them-



selves, body and soul, for time and for eternity to him. Let us imagine with what feelings his apostles would approach that holy table, where they saw exhibited before their eyes, in emblems indeed, and yet, in some sort, in emblems full of reality, the memorials of their Master's dying love. Could they come with coldness of heart to that table, that reminded them of his broken body, and his poured out blood? How would the sight of them animate them to consecrate themselves to such a Master, and teach them to "count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus their Lord?"

And is it the apostles only, that have cause to remember Jesus? Was it only for the apostles that he lived and suffered and died? Was it for the apostles alone, that "he bore our sins and carried our sorrows?" Was it they only whose rebellion he had forgiven, whose ingratitude he had forgotten? Was it they only who received his bounties, abused his goodness, despised his mercy, and obtained a place in his blood bought church? Is it they alone whose names he now bears for a memorial on his heart before the Lord continually? Was it for the apostles alone that he stooped to the cross of Calvary, and now appears in the presence of God?

My brethren, let these considerations come home to our best affections. What does the remembrance of Jesus imply to you? Do "*you* know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for *your* sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich?" Let us not forget, that the remembrance of any person must be deep in proportion to our value of that person, our acquaintance with him, the habit of intercourse and friendship we have had with him. Let the depth of feeling by which you remember Jesus, or the coldness of heart by which you can turn away from the holy table to which he invites you, be the measure this day, of your experience of the love of Christ that passeth knowledge, and of your estimate of its value.

When you think of Jesus, how do you remember Him? Do you think of the friend that gave himself for you, as "the Lamb of God that has taken away the sin of the world?" Do you believe him to be the shepherd and bishop of your souls, whose eye is ever on you, whose heart beats with affection for you, whose

tongue is ever occupied in pleading your cause before the Lord, whose wisdom and skill and energy are exercised in making all things work together for your souls' and bodies' eternal good? When you remember Jesus, oh do you remember with shame, your own waywardness, your own forgetfulness, your own ingratitude, your own slowness of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken; your slowness to trust in all the promises he has given, to believe in the assurance of the love he has left on record to every one that believeth? Do you believe the record that God has given of his own dear Son, and this is the record, that we have eternal life through him? May we be enabled rightly to hear, and rightly to observe the Saviour's parting words, "do this in remembrance of me!"

This leads us to other purposes of the Lord's supper. By partaking of this ordinance, we declare ourselves to be the disciples of Jesus, for the evangelist tells us, that when he had broken bread, he gave it to the disciples—it is not said to the apostles, but to the disciples—and said, "do this in remembrance of me." These disciples were the taught ones of Jesus, those who were under his instruction, they were sinners, but they were pardoned sinners, they were sinners, but they were accepted in that accepted time, they were sanctified by the power of God's Holy Spirit, they were redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus, redeemed from all iniquity, and purchased unto him to be for him "a peculiar people, zealous of good works." By partaking of this ordinance, we declare our belief, that it is a cup of blessing, the source of spiritual blessing to those who rightly partake of it. The very name, "cup of blessing," implies, that there and then God meets us in blessing, Christ comes to feast with us, and we with him; it is not merely a memorial of the Saviour's love, merely a will expressive of our faith, it is one that is accompanied by his own presence, and one that is an abundant cup of blessing to the souls of those who in it feed on him. It is there that we meet with the once crucified, but now risen and glorified Saviour, it is there that he makes that cup a source of blessing to our souls, accompanying the believing use of that ordinance, by the power and energy of his own Holy Spirit.

It is called the communion of the



body of Christ, the communion of the blood of Christ,—“the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?” One purpose, then, of that holy ordinance is to make us participants of the body and blood of Christ our Saviour. The apostle, explaining this communion, teaches us that it is the communion of the Spirit, because of the close connexion in the ever blessed Trinity. In Philippians ii. 12, the apostle is appealing to the experience of the indwelling of the Spirit, the experimental knowledge of Christian doctrine and Christian truth which the Philippian church had, and he says, “If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship (or communion) of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.” That communion of the Spirit is thus described in Colossians i. 27—“To whom God would make known, what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is *Christ* in you the hope of glory.”

In coming to that holy ordinance, we should come to it with the fulness of faith that it is indeed the cup of blessing, that it is the communion of the body and blood of Christ,—that while into our body we take the bread and wine, into our souls we take that which is declared to be the body and blood of Christ; we feed on Christ's body, and drink into Christ's blood—and thus he communicates himself into the souls of his believing people.

It is also a declaration of our state, of our faith and hope, a declaration of these things, not only to the church, but to the world,—“as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye *do show* the Lord's death till he come.” As it was instituted for Christ's disciples, we, by coming to it, declare, that we are the disciples of Christ, that we have separated ourselves from all false systems of religion; that we are purchased by the blood of the Son of God to be in his true church; that we believe ourselves to be his people and the sheep of his pasture, and we declare also what we believe to be the privilege of his people; “we do show the Lord's death,” we do show the Lord's com-

ing again; we believe the bread and wine visibly set before us, that blessed One who has borne our sins in his own body on the tree—that atonement by which “we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins;” we declare our faith in all the blessed results that are the consequence of the blood-shedding of Christ our Saviour, and our hope of our personal interest in that blessed hope of the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, “who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify us unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” Our time would not permit to consider other purposes of the Lord's supper, we shall therefore briefly consider—

III. WHO ARE THE PERSONS THAT OUGHT TO PARTAKE OF IT. This is a solemn inquiry—if we partake of it unworthily, we are “guilty of the body and blood of the Lord,” and if we dare not partake of it, we are giving solemn judgment against ourselves, that we are not Christ's people, that we dare not enrol ourselves amongst the number, that, though we have the name of Christ upon us and are Christian professors, our hearts condemn us as hypocrites in professing the Christian name, and we, by our own act, cast ourselves out of the Christian church, and throw ourselves back into the heathen world. It is then a solemn thing to come up to the Lord's table, and a still more awful thing to stay away from it. At the institution of it we are told, he gave it to his disciples. Now, by baptism, we are all disciples of Christ, and therefore we are, by baptism, entitled to the holy ordinance, unless we exclude ourselves from it. In St. Matt. xxviii. 19. 20., Christ says, (marginal reading,) “go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.” By comparing this passage with Galatians III. 27, we find, “that baptism makes us Christ's disciples.” As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ; but while we are thus by birth-right entitled to that holy ordinance, yet the apostle tells us, “let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.”

Now, what is the examination that we are to make of ourselves? It is not, are we sinless;—for then, none could come to it. It is not, have we ever sinned;—for the very ordinance is a remembrance to us of the Saviour who died for sinners. If those who never sinned were to come up to it, it would be a useless ordinance; “for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” If those only who are now sinless were to come up to it, it would be equally useless, because, “if any man say he has no sin, he deceives himself, and the truth is not in him.” Those who are really entitled to come to that holy ordinance are those, who, having been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, do now believe in Jesus, for the salvation of their souls—those who believe that their sins were nailed to his cross—that their debt has been cancelled by his dying love—that their souls have been renewed by his Holy Spirit—that, while they feel within them fleshy lusts that war against the soul, yet feel within them joy in the Lord, enabling them to say, “I delight in the law of the Lord, after the inner man, but I see another law in my members, warring *against* the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” Those who are entitled to come to that holy table are those believing sinners, who, while they bear about with them a body of sin and death, feel that sin is their burden, sinfulness is their grief—who, “forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forward to those things that are before, press toward the mark for the prize of their high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Oh, my brethren, those and those only are entitled to come to that holy table; and if you diligently scrutinize the motives that keep many of you away from it, you will find it is carelessness about it, that you think you will find a more convenient season to commune with a dying Saviour or with a risen Lord; or else, it is conscience that keeps you away from it—you find that sin is so dear to you that you cannot part with it. You find, that he only is the disciple indeed who endeavours to cleanse himself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit; and yet your conscience tells you, that you have some sin that you cannot leave, though asked to do it by a crucified Saviour!

It cannot be too often impressed on us that it is not the sin of yesterday, not the sin of to-day, but *the sin of to-morrow*, that keeps thousands away from that holy table. Remember, that Jesus came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. The very vilest are welcome to him. He does not ask you to hesitate one hour. He only asks you to give yourselves to him now, now to trust in his love, to rest on his atonement, to rejoice in his salvation, and thus at this moment to begin the life of a believer in him at his own holy table. Can you refuse him? will you still prefer the pleasures of sin, and again turn your back upon a crucified Saviour, who so freely invites you? We now come to—

IV. THE DUTY OF OBSERVING IT. It was given for disciples. Now, in external things, every one is a disciple who is baptized and under Christian instruction. In Saint John's Gospel, vi. 66. people who went away from Jesus, and walked no more with him, are called Christ's disciples—“from that time, many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him;” and, therefore, as far as external discipline goes, the minister of Christ is not to exclude any person from that holy ordinance whose outward conduct is clean. As professing Christians we have no liberty of observing it or not as we please. Christ instituted it for his disciples, and therefore no disciple ought to refuse it; it was to them he said, “do this in remembrance of me.” We are shut up in the danger of damnation, if we receive it unworthily; and in the danger of casting off the profession of the Christian faith, if we do not receive it at all;—there is no choice between these two. Like the condition of the sinner who has heard the Gospel, he is shut up into Christ. The law comes with its condemning power, telling us we are under the curse of the law, and pointing us in this way to a crucified Saviour. It tells us, if we hear not his voice, if we receive not his salvation by faith, we must be eternally ruined. And so does this holy ordinance tell us the same. It tells us of sin and its danger; it speaks to us of the Saviour—it invites to him—it asks us to become his disciples, that we may rightly receive it—it tells us to examine ourselves, and see whether we are his disciples indeed, and then it tells us that we are bound to receive it;

because he says, "do this in remembrance of me."

Now, what would we have thought of the apostles, if, when they saw the table spread before them, and heard him say, "This do in remembrance of me," if they said within themselves, well! he did not tell us when to do it—how often to do it; and though the table is spread, and though our Master is here with us, and every thing ready prepared, we will not come now? Would we not feel that they were guilty of great ingratitude, of a crying sin? Would we not turn from them with abhorrence and disgust at hearing, that they were neglecting the blessed pledges of the love of Christ? Now, the Lord says, "he that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me;" and therefore when he has appointed a lawfully ordained ministry, and when the minister stands at that table, and consecrates the bread and wine, making it a cup of blessing, and, in the Lord's name, exhorts the disciples to come to the holy table, you are guilty of the same sin that the apostles would have been guilty of, if you dare not, or will not come, and you are guilty of another sin, if you go unworthily.

May we be enabled to do it in remembrance of him with a safe conscience; to do it believing, that our sins are pardoned, our blessings secured, and our necessities supplied by the unspeakable love of Christ, that passeth knowledge; that when we do it in remembrance of him, we may do it with the proper feeling with which we ought to approach the holy table; that we may do it with that faith and confidence, which those ought to have, who are coming to feed on a crucified Saviour, and to commune with a risen Lord; and thus doing it in remembrance of him, we shall, indeed, find it to be an ordinance of blessing, a means of grace, a source of abiding in him; so that we who feed on him, may, indeed, live by him in the power and presence of his Holy Spirit, and be with him in the hope of glory throughout eternal ages.

May the Lord, the Spirit, carry home his own truth to each soul now before me, enabling us now and ever to do this in remembrance of Him who gave himself for us, "that we being rooted and grounded in love, may grow up into him in all things," and be ripened for his service here, and for his presence and blessedness hereafter.

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We have much pleasure in announcing for an early number a Sermon by the Rev. J. N. LOMBARD, of Cork.

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# THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

## GOSPEL PREACHER.

"We preach Christ crucified—

"Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God."—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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### THE CONVERSION AND RESTORATION OF THE JEWS,

WITH

A STATEMENT OF THE ORIGIN AND PROGRESS

OF THE

"LONDON SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIANITY  
AMONGST THE JEWS."

AND

THE ARGUMENTS, MOTIVES, AND ENCOURAGEMENTS TO SEEK THE

SALVATION OF ISRAEL,

SPECIALLY ARRANGED FOR THIS WORK,

BY THE REV. J. S. C. F. FREY.

BEING requested to give a statement of the present circumstances of the Jewish nation, and of their future restoration and conversion to Christ, and also a history of the origin and progress of Christian efforts to promote the conversion of the Jews, and the unparalleled effects produced, it will be necessary for me to give, first, some account respecting myself, and afterwards state the objects of my present agency.

I was born of Jewish parents, and educated strictly in the Jewish religion, and I afterwards sustained the office of teacher in Israel, and reader in the synagogue for seven years. In 1795, while travelling in a stage coach with a Christian, he first mentioned the name of Jesus with reverence, and said, that Messiah has come, and to prove it, quoted

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Jeremiah xxxi. where God had promised to make a new covenant with his people. This produced the first impression on my mind, "perhaps the Christian religion is true;" and I resolved to search the Scriptures, and after three years, I made public profession in the Lord Jesus Christ by baptism. In 1799, I originated a missionary seminary in Berlin, where I was one of the students. In 1801, a letter was received from the London Missionary Society, requesting that three of these students should be sent over to England, and the society would forward them to Africa as Missionaries among the Hottentots. I was one of the three that was sent. On my arrival in London, the directors, finding that I was a descendant of Abraham, proposed that I should stay and preach to my Jewish brethren. Not

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knowing the English language, they sent me to Gosport, in Hampshire, into their missionary seminary, where I stayed four years. In 1805, I returned to London, and commenced preaching to my Jewish brethren. Here I met with no little opposition, not only from Jews and infidels, but more especially from professing Christians, who thought that there was no necessity or utility in doing any thing for the Jews, that they had every opportunity of knowing the Gospel, but were obstinate, stubborn, and unbelieving. Accordingly, I travelled through England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, to give information respecting the state of the Jews, to show that they had no more opportunities of hearing the Gospel in their own language, than Christians have of hearing the Mahomedan religion in their places of worship. I was twenty-five years of age before I heard a sermon of any kind; for there is no preaching whatever amongst the Jews, nor have the Jews the New Testament, how then could they become acquainted with the true character of Jesus Christ? Hence they continue in the belief imbibed from their childhood, that Christ had been a deceiver, an impostor, and a blasphemer; and although they profess to believe the whole of the Old Testament, yet few Jews have ever seen the prophetic writings, the characteristics of the true Messiah.

The Jews are said to be an obstinate, stubborn, unbelieving people; 'strange, that the Jews should continue for 1800 years believing that Jesus was an impostor and a deceiver, while Christians believe, that he was the promised Messiah, that he was the Saviour of the world, and the Son of God!' This has been the language of Christians—I have heard them for thirty-eight years charging the Jews as obstinate, stubborn, unbelieving people, because they will not believe as Christians do. What would you think of me, if I were to put into a newspaper, that you were very obstinate, stubborn, unbelieving people, because you did not believe what took place in France an hour ago? Why do we not believe it? Not because we are obstinate, stubborn, and unbelieving, but because, until we hear what has taken place, of course we cannot believe. But suppose we should read, that in France a certain river, always known in geography to have run from north to south, had changed its

course in one night, and now ran from east to west, and up hill for 100 miles, would you not say, 'I will suspend my judgment, till I have good evidence that I have been in error';—and who would say, you were obstinate, stubborn, and unbelieving?—who would not approve of your prudence?—And why should we condemn the poor Jews as obstinate, stubborn, and unbelieving, because they believe only what they have heard, and do not believe what they have not? From my childhood, before I was five years of age, I heard from my teachers and my parents, that there had been such a person, called Jesus of Nazareth, but they also told me, he had been a deceiver, that he had been an impostor and blasphemer—and a thousand other blasphemies I read in a little book called "The history of Jesus," written by the Rabbies:—well, was I not bound to believe it? Are not your children bound to believe what you teach them, till they consider for themselves, and find out that you are in error? If they do, they ought to renounce their error, and follow the truth. But how are the Jews to find it out?

But Christians say, do not the Jews know the Gospel?—do they not harden themselves against it?—have they not places of worship? Very true;—it is to the credit of my Jewish brethren that I say, when there are ten Jewish people in a district, they have a place of worship: there may be fifty or one hundred Christian families without one place of worship; my Jewish brethren are more zealous:—but to say, that, because they have a place of worship, they therefore hear the Gospel, that is a false conclusion. The premises are true, they have places of worship—the conclusion is false, strange, and unreasonable, that because they have a place of worship, they hear the Gospel;—who ever went to a Christian place of worship to hear the Mahomedan religion? How would it shock your ears, if a Christian minister was to preach Mahomedanism, and preach the false prophet? Just so, would it shock the ears of a Jew in his place of worship, if a Rabbi were to "preach Christ and him crucified." How could it be expected? Besides this, the Rabbi must first know the Gospel before he can preach it, and where is he to get that knowledge? How is it that the Gentiles did not believe in the coming

of the Messiah, when the Jews expected his coming? Had they not preachers—philosophers that instructed them, who delivered lectures in the arts and sciences, and morality? Why did they not preach to them the coming of the Messiah? Because their teachers did not know it themselves;—they themselves did not know the Gospel—how could they preach it?

But, it has been said, the Jews have the Scriptures, and that is the only way to find out, whether Christ is the Messiah or not. I agree to it, there is no other way to ascertain whether or not Christ is the Messiah, but by comparing the Old and New Testament. This is the rational way—this is the way in all civilized nations. Suppose a gentleman had left a large estate to a certain individual, and described that individual in such a manner, as to render it utterly impossible to mistake a stranger for him: when the gentleman dies, a thousand persons present themselves at once, each says I am the rightful heir, the only one: who is to know it, who is to decide? No one but the executors; and the executors have no right to decide it by any other rule except by the will, whoever does not agree with the will must be rejected. There is no difficulty in the matter—it needs no inspiration—no dreams or visions—no superior judgment—they have nothing to do but look to the will, and ask, “Well, Sir, what is your name?” “My name is Solomon the son of David.” “No, that is not the name”—and he is rejected. Another one is asked—his name is Isaac, the son of Abraham. That agrees with the will; but there may be another Isaac, and he is asked, “Where were you born?” “In Scotland.” That does not agree with the will. Another is Isaac, the son of Abraham, and he is born in France—that agrees with the will—so far much better;—but there may be a second Isaac, the son of Abraham, in France, too; they look again to the will and ask, “How old are you?” He answers, “1800 years old.” He is also rejected—and so must every one be rejected till he is found in whom every thing stated in that will agrees; and then justice requires that he be proclaimed the rightful heir.

Now, in the Old Testament, which we will call the will of the testator, God promised four thousand years before Christ came, at different times, and in different

places, what kind of a person he would send as the Messiah. He tells us he is to be a man of the human race, that he is to be of the “seed of a woman”—“Abraham’s seed,”—of “the tribe of Judah”—of “the family of David”—“born in Bethlehem”—that he should appear while the second temple was standing—before the seventy weeks are accomplished—before the sacrifice should cease, and a thousand other characteristics. Whoever comes and says, I am the Messiah, we must look into his history, whether all things agree with him: if they do, then he is to be pronounced the Messiah, whether they like him or not. They have no right to reject a man, because he is blind of one eye, or lame, and choose another—they have only a right to judge and pronounce a verdict. Whoever agrees with the will, whether they like him or not, they must pronounce him to be the Messiah. The Jews are not to be blamed for not having come to the conclusion that Jesus is the Messiah, because the Jews, as a nation, have never had the New Testament, and not one Jew in ten thousand has ever seen it; how then can he know the character of Messiah? He only believes what his parents told him, that, He was an impostor and a deceiver,—he was, according to the Old Testament, to be a good man, and therefore the Jew concludes he cannot be the Messiah, because his parents tell him he was a wicked man. Let the Jews then have the New Testament, before we condemn them as an obstinate, stubborn, unbelieving people.

But it has been said, why did not the Jews go into Christian places of worship, there they might hear the Gospel? Now, there have been almost insurmountable difficulties in the way. The fear of man is a great snare. Why did Nicodemus go to Jesus by night? Because he was afraid to go by day—“for the Jews had made a law, that if any man should confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.” And is it to be wondered at, that my Jewish brethren should be afraid to go into a Christian place of worship? Is that law obsolete? No, it is still in force: when a Jew is known to become a Christian, he is excommunicated and banished—no man can have any dealings with him—parents, friends, relations hate him and persecute him, and if they could take away his

life, they would do it, for they think they are doing God service. People have said, oh! the Jews must be very cruel. No, not more so than the Gentiles. Then why do they hate their brethren that believe in Christ? For the same reason that Abraham took his son Isaac, and bound him on the altar. Was he a wicked, unnatural parent? No, "I love him," said the Lord, "he is my friend;" he "has not withheld his son, his only son from me;" he has been willing to offer him up. And must the Jews do that which they know to be unnatural, and against the moral law? Yes, when God requires it, they have to obey. "If any worship another God, he shall be put to death." Now, the Jews look on their brother who believes in Christ, as an idolator, and therefore they consider themselves bound to put him to death, if they could. This is the reason, why Paul of Tarsus, a humane and conscientious man, went down to Damascus to deliver all the Christians he could find to prison: not because he was a cruel man;—remember Paul never meddled with a single Gentile—we do not know an instance that he took a Gentile, and put him to death—they were idolators, and he did not care what idols they worshipped, but his own brethren he considered himself bound to persecute, till after his conversion.

There is another reason why the Jews did not go into Christians places of worship. Suppose a Jew had gone into a Christian place of worship in Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, aye, or Britain, too, and stood up in the midst of the congregation, with tears in his eyes, like the three thousand at the day of Pentecost, exclaiming, "men and brethren, what shall I do?" and suppose the Pope had been the preacher, what would have been his answer? Why the Pope, professing to be the successor of Peter, should give no other answer than Peter did—"repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." But would the Pope have said so? Oh, no; either he or his priests would have said, "go and confess your sins to the priest, and pay so much for every mass, for every prayer, and give much alms to the poor, and fast often in the year; but remember, that after all you have done, when you die

the work is not finished—you must go to purgatory, and the more money you leave, the more prayers will be offered, and the sooner the soul will be released to enter heaven." Would the Jew, think you, have supposed this to be the Christian religion, and the speaker the *head* of the Christian Church?—or rather would he not have concluded that he was a Jewish rabbi, for the rabbies would teach him the same thing?

But there is another reason why the Jew did not go into a Christian place of worship. Put yourself into his situation, and consider how you would act. Suppose a person were to invite you to go several miles to see an extraordinary novelty—a new sect of men that came down direct from heaven, and brought with them a better and purer religion, as they stated, than what was hitherto known, and that that religion was printed in golden letters, would you not have curiosity to go and hear and see them? Well, then, before the day came, you hear reports circulated that a great number of robberies and murders have been committed by that new sect, by the direction of their leader, and under the sanction of his golden bible,—what would you think of that religion? Would you wish to join them, and become a member of their society? I dare say you would judge as your Lord and Saviour directed you to do—"a tree is known by its fruit;" you would say, if their religion teaches them to rob and murder and spoil, it must be a bad religion.

Now is this a fiction, or is it an awful reality? How have my poor brethren been treated in every Christian country? Have they not been robbed and spoiled of their property—hunted and persecuted—banished from every country again and again—tormented in the Inquisition, shut up in prisons, and massacred by thousands? And by whom? By those who called themselves Christians, and wanted them to join their religion! Are the Jews to be blamed for continuing to abhor the Christian religion? Oh, but then you say, this is not the Christian religion, this is not the religion of the New Testament, I thank God I know it now, *but I did not know it when I was a Jew*.

If Christians really wish to see their prayers answered, let them use the proper means, let them furnish the Jews with the



preaching of the gospel, let them send the Scriptures among them, and let them act as their Lord and Master did, who was "meek and lowly of heart," and "went about doing good." And if the Jews see, that Christians are benevolent and kind towards them, they will begin to think better of them and their religion, and when they begin to examine, we may expect God will bestow his blessing.

It was therefore my endeavour to point out the necessity of furnishing the Jews with the preaching of the gospel, with the sacred Scriptures, and to teach them the conduct and conversation becoming the gospel of Christ. Notwithstanding these difficulties, I persevered in preaching for four years. But, in 1809, christians of different denominations thought it would be for the benefit of the Jewish cause if there was a distinct society separated from the mission to the heathen. Accordingly I left the Missionary Society and formed "the London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews," and continued preaching under its patronage for six years longer, and God greatly blessed our efforts to the conversion of a goodly number. But in 1815, the Society had involved itself into debt which threatened the ruin of the Institution; when the Rev. Lewis Way, a minister of the established church, deeming it a pity that this good cause should sink for want of money to pay its just demands, proposed that if the Dissenters would give over the cause to the Episcopalians, he would pay the whole debt. Two public meetings took place, and by a unanimous resolution, the Dissenters gave the cause up to the Episcopalians, on the condition that all should be honorably discharged. Mr. Way was as good as his word, he paid the whole debt, which was no less than £18,000. The rule was then adopted that all things were to be done according to the discipline of the established church.

I will now leave the Society, and state the objects of my present agency. In 1816, I went with my family to America, arrived at New York, and for four years I have been a settled pastor in or near that city. During this period I had little opportunity of preaching to my Jewish brethren, I therefore resolved to write letters to them. Accordingly I took the lectures which I preached in London, containing every doctrine in the Christian

religion and every prophecy in the old Testament, to show that the Christian religion is the same as the Jews' religion as it regards doctrines, and that in Christ all the prophecies have been fulfilled. I addressed this letter to one of my own brothers whose name was Benjamin, and as my first name is Joseph, I gave the title to the work, Joseph and Benjamin. When these two volumes were published, the reviewers strongly recommended that they should be circulated among the Jews in the English language, and also be translated into the German: according to the wish of the Society, I immediately sent the two volumes called Joseph and Benjamin to Hamburg, to get them translated in the German language, and in May, 1838, I went myself to Germany, found the work translated and took the manuscript to Berlin, presented it to the Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews in that city, and agreed that they should publish 5000 copies in the German language, the expenses to be paid out of the money to be collected by me. The work has since been printed and paid for. I now commenced travelling and have travelled more than seven thousand miles, visited more than four hundred congregations, preached more than five hundred times, and collected all the money necessary to pay for those printed in the German and English languages, and all my travelling expenses. Such is the first object of my present agency, which is nearly accomplished.

I shall now proceed to the second part of my agency, which is to ascertain the sentiments of the public in this country and in Europe, respecting the necessity of a settlement in America, to furnish the Jews with employment as well as with Christian instruction, and, if necessary, to seek the co-operation of the friends of Israel. To give a clear statement of this part of my agency, it is necessary to mention that in 1820, I formed a society in America, for meliorating the condition of the Jews, by furnishing them in a settlement with employment as well as with Christian instruction. I have also travelled in America many thousand miles, and collected more than 16,000 dollars;—but the society have not been able to carry the object into effect, having had no Jews sent over, either from this country



or from Europe. Accordingly, on my arrival in London, I opened a correspondence with the Society for the Jews in Germany, to ascertain their opinion respecting the necessity and expediency of such a settlement, and have received full and satisfactory information in the affirmative; and in my travels through Great Britain and Ireland, I have received the signatures of more than a hundred ministers, recommending the formation of a Society in London, to pay the expenses of the passage across the Atlantic of those Jews who are desirous to join the settlement; I found it, however, impossible to form a society in union with Dissenters and Episcopalians. I have, therefore, submitted all my documents to Sir Thomas Baring, president of the London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews, to ascertain his opinion, and the following is an extract from his letter:—

“I have not time nor space in this letter to enumerate the many efforts that have been made, but all in vain; but I will at once proceed to give you my opinion of your plan of a Society for facilitating the emigration of Jews to America, and I will also at once say, that after giving to it the best consideration in my power, it has my unqualified favorable opinion. The desideratum which has long perplexed the friends for affording temporal relief to the Jews, will, I think, find in it a solution of all other difficulties. As you have my good opinion, you shall also have an unequivocal proof of my sincerity; when I hear that your plan is in a forward state, I will send you a donation of one hundred pounds, with my best wishes for its success.”

Sir Thomas has also laid the subject before the committee of the society, and I have every reason to expect they will undertake the expenses of the Jewish proselytes across the Atlantic.

We will now return to speak of the unparalleled success that has attended the efforts of this society.

The Holy Scriptures are put into the hands of the Jews in the various languages and dialects, common among them.

Tracts in various languages are also circulated, amongst which may be particularly mentioned a series of papers, under the title of the “Old Paths.”

An Episcopal Chapel, at Bethnel Green,

is opened for divine service, to which Schools are attached.

Schools have also been established on the Continent.

Missionaries have been sent to different parts of the world, to distribute publications among the Jews, and visit them from house to house, and the result has been, that no less than *three thousand* Jews have already been publicly baptized! and not less than *forty-three* of my brethren are now preaching the glorious Gospel in different parts of the world!

An Episcopal Church is being built on Mount Sion, near the Jaffa Gate, in Jerusalem.

And as regards the results of their exertions, the society has reason to be thankful, for the success with which their labours, under God's blessing, have been attended.

We shall now just allude to THE ARGUMENTS, MOTIVES, AND ENCOURAGEMENTS TO SEEK THE SALVATION OF ISRAEL.

I. THE SUPERIOR CLAIMS WHICH THE JEWS HAVE UPON CHRISTIANS.

1. *Their afflicted and degraded condition demand the tenderest pity and compassion.*

“To him that is afflicted pity should be shown from his friends,” Job vi. 14. Were a man of wisdom to form a scale of degrees according to which pity should be shown, he would doubtless write the Jews upon the uppermost line, as a body of people who have the most powerful claim to the tenderest compassion of the disciples of Jesus Christ. “The recollection of ancient grandeur and glory tends to enhance the sense of present humiliation and distress.”

Persons who have always been poor and miserable, have a claim on our pity and relief; such is the state of the poor heathen. But when persons who were once elevated to the throne of dignity, and stood in the foremost rank of human exaltation, but have since sunk into the very abyss of wretchedness, and their very names serve to express contempt and misery, *their* state more forcibly moves the soul. Such is the case of the poor Jews. What then must be the feelings of my dear people, when comparing their present degradation and misery with their former glory and felicity? Formerly they were the people of God, when none else were his people;

and among them Jehovah dwelt, when no other nation raised him a habitation. By them was he honored and adored, while every one else fell down and worshipped stocks and stones. From the days of Abraham to the coming of Christ, they were unto God "a peculiar treasure above all people, a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation," Exod. xix. 5, 6. "To them pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came who is over all, God blessed for ever," Rom. ix. 4, 5. "What nation was there ever like unto that great nation, that has had God so nigh unto them as the Lord their God was unto Israel?" "But how is the gold become dim; how is the most fine gold changed!" Lam. iv. 1. "How does the city sit solitary that was full of people! How is she become as a widow? She that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary!" Lam. i. 1. If her honours were unparralleled, no less unparralleled have been her calamities. Having rejected the Messiah, and called for his blood on them and on their children, a righteous God has hid his countenance from them, and wrath has come upon them to the very uttermost, and that for ages together without mitigation.

How awfully true the prediction of Hosea iii. 4, "The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim." And in the language of Asaph, my dear people may say, "They have burned up all the synagogues of God in the land; we see not our signs; there is no more any prophet, neither is there among us any that knoweth how long," Ps. lxxiv. 8, 9. Did our fathers sit down at the rivers of Babylon, weeping and hanging their harps on the willows, refusing to sing the song of Zion in a strange land, although they knew that their captivity was only to be for seventy years; how much greater the affliction of Israel, which has continued for nearly eighteen hundred years, and none can tell "how long." Well may they adopt the bitter lamentation of Jeremiah and say, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?

Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord had afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger; from above hath he sent fire into my bones, and it prevaileth against them," Lam. i. 12, 13. With greater propriety than Job may Israel say, "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God has touched me," Job xix. 21. But how widely different has been the condition of my dear people? Their cup of affliction has been unmixed with a drop of consolation. With the loss of their country, their city, and their temple, they have lost all the comforts and supports of true religion. Sacrifices, the life and soul of the Mosaic dispensation, having ceased, their present code of religion has become a mere dead skeleton; so far from comforting and supporting, it has served them like "the lamp of the sepulchre, which serves to discover, whilst it cannot disperse, the blackness of the surrounding darkness." My dear people, having lost sight of the glorious Gospel, the glad tidings of salvation, of pardon, peace, and eternal glory, through the all-atoning sacrifice of the Messiah, and still clinging to the holy, just, and good law, which, whilst all-sufficient to condemn, is neither able to pardon the guilty, nor cleanse and purify the defiled and polluted conscience of the sinner; have found by sad experience the force of that declaration of God's holy Word, "The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear."—Prov. xviii. 14. Hence they are without spiritual consolation and support under affliction, and without a joyful hope in the all-important hour of death. For seven long years, whilst officiating rabbi in the synagogue, it was my painful lot to attend the sick and the dying; and whilst I found all of them sensible of their being sinners, exposed to the wrath of Almighty God, I never found one saying, like good old Simeon, "Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation!" Oh, how painful the scene of a dying sinner without the hope of salvation!

But whilst the *spiritual* misery of the Jews beggars description, their *temporal* circumstances have not been any better; scattered through every country, the predictions of the prophets respecting them

minutely fulfilled, they have for many centuries been a by-word and a proverb, the very scorn and outcast of the world. What persecutions, what massacres, what confiscations, what expulsion and banishment have not my afflicted people endured in all ages of their dispersion! But between their spiritual and temporal afflictions there is this great difference. The former was inflicted by the hands of a righteous God as the just reward of their deeds, but the latter was inflicted by wicked men who hated them without a cause, and persecuted them without pity.

2. *The injuries inflicted require restitution and satisfaction.*

The Jews have been injured both negatively and positively. Christians are verily guilty both of the sin of omission and commission. For ages past no man cared for their souls; but the Gospel has not only been withheld from the Jews, but various stumbling-blocks have been thrown in their way. Instead of presenting before their eyes the principles of Christianity in their divine, heavenly, and lovely character, the conduct of its professors has led them to despise and hate them. For as the tree is known by its fruit, so the Jews judged of the Christian religion by the conduct of its professors. In every country where the Romish faith exists, and especially where it is established, the sight of their worship and of their churches must be disgusting and revolting to the Jews in the extreme. The worship of one true God is the fundamental article of their religion; but in the communion of Rome, they hear prayers addressed to creatures, to the Virgin Mary and the saints. The adoration of graven images has justly been held by the Jews in the fullest abhorrence. But in every place of worship they appear in silver and gold, in wood and stone, and the lowliest adoration is paid them. When they pass along the street, and meet a priest carrying the host, which they will call, in plain language, *a wafer in a box*, and see the people all kneel down in the mire with deepest reverence, and they are told that this is (*le bon Dieu*), the gracious God—what can be expected of Jews in these situations? That they should embrace such a religion? No! who could wish them? But that they should look upon

it with cordial detestation and sovereign contempt.

Nor are the wicked lives of Protestants less stumbling to the Jews than the idolatry of the Romans. Do they not see what is as bad or worse? Do they not hear blasphemies, and oaths, and imprecations, coupled with the name of the blessed Jesus, every hour ascend to heaven? Do they not behold intemperance, lewdness, injustice, nay every crime committed that can offend God, or render man guilty? To instance in one sin; while the Jews profess, and in general do actually show much regard for the Sabbath, as a day of rest, from business and from pleasure, do they not see the mass of those who call themselves Christians, making it a day of business or of pleasure, and treating the divine command which they profess to reverence, with the utmost contempt? What ideas can they form of our religion? and have they no claim, that justice should award them a suitable compensation?

3. *The voice of equity as well as justice demands our most serious attention.* That we Gentiles, received the Gospel from the Jews, and are indebted to them for all that we know of Jesus, and redeeming love, will be universally acknowledged, for the Gospel came forth from Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem, and on this account their debtors verily we are. What I plead for, brethren, is that you and I should acknowledge and pay the debt, by communicating to them that Gospel which they first communicated to us.

4. *Gratitude for favours received call for acts of benevolence and kindness.* Public opinion, in every civilized age, has always sanctioned the demands of gratitude by her powerful voice, and holds out her finger with contempt and detestation at the man on whose forehead is written *ingratitude*; but the Gospel marks ingratitude with the hottest brand of infamy, and it holds up gratitude as one of the most powerful principles in the Christian's breast, in which it confides, for the production of the most powerful and important effects. Now, if bowels of compassion form a peculiar feature in the Christian character—if ingratitude be a monstrous sin—if it be our duty to be just in all our dealings, and whenever we have wronged others, to make restitution



to the utmost of our power, then it is our duty to attend to the present state of the Jews, and to employ means for their conversion.

II. SECONDLY, THE GREAT ENCOURAGEMENT WHICH GOD HAS GIVEN US, BOTH IN HIS WORD AND IN HIS PROVIDENCE. To the man of the world the hope of success is the sole motive and spring of his actions, but the will of God is the pure motive, and the all-powerful spring of action to the Christian. Had he the prospect of gaining a world without the approbation of his heavenly Father, he would not attempt the enterprize. But in seeking the salvation of the Jews, he is sure both of acting agreeably to the will of God, and of meeting with success. That it is the will of God that the Jews shall be converted will hereafter be proved by the many precious promises contained in the unerring Word of God, written and preserved for the encouragement of our faith, prayer, and action; and that our efforts will be crowned with success, is evident from the remarkable dispensations of God's providence in the present period.

Our blessed Lord reproved the Jews for neglecting to observe "the signs of the time" respecting his kingdom, and shall we neglect to observe the wonderful signs of the times respecting the restoration and conversion of Judah and Israel? For the last fifty years, the way for their restoration to the land of their fathers has been preparing in a manner unparalleled in the history of the world. When the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage drew nigh, God raised up Moses and Aaron; when the captivity of Babylon came to a close, God called for Cyrus his servant; and has God done nothing in our day to show that the captivity of my dear people is drawing to a close? Is it not a striking fact, that the Jews have of late years manifested a more earnest desire, and firmer expectation of a *speedy* return to the land of Canaan, than has ever before been known?

A general change in the treatment of Jews, who, till this century, were everywhere "trodden down of the Gentiles," is another preparation sign.

The unprecedented interest Christians have taken in promoting the conversion of the Jews, is another encouraging sign of the time. When we see Christians, not only fervent in prayer, but also diligent in the use of proper means, we

may safely expect the blessing of God. Hence, says the Psalmist, "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favor her, yea the set time is come."

III.—THE MANY AND GLORIOUS BENEFITS WHICH WILL RESULT FROM THE CONVERSION OF THE JEWS.

These benefits, if I am not greatly mistaken, will rank next to those that followed the incarnation of the Son of God. At his birth the angels sang "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men;" and when the Jews are converted, God will be glorified, angels will rejoice, and men be blessed.

In Psalm cii. a prophecy concerning the future conversion of the Jews, it is foretold that "When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory."

If we be Christians, indeed, there is no one object which we have more at heart than this, "that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ." And how astonishingly will the conversion of the Jews promote it! Long, long, have that unhappy people dishonoured God by rejecting the Messiah promised to the fathers. For seventeen hundred years they have trodden under foot the Son of God, and accounted the blood of the covenant, shed for the remission of their sins, to be an unholy thing. But when the children of Israel return to the Lord; when they look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn; when they believe in him whom God hath sent, and trust in him for righteousness and strength; and when in him the house of Israel shall seek to be justified, and glory, God will be glorified in an eminent degree. To see this people lying at Jehovah's feet confessing the heinousness of their guilt in rejecting Christ, acknowledging themselves altogether in the wrong, and God altogether in the right, intreating him to pardon their sins, and be reconciled to them again; this is highly honourable to him. To hear them professing their belief, that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah; to behold them covered with shame and confusion of face, because they refused to receive him; to hear them express their cordial faith in his name, and their entire dependence on him for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; and



their solemn purpose to live no longer to themselves, but to him who died for them and rose again, is glorifying God in the highest degree; for it is a profession from his own people of their approbation of his great plan for man's redemption, and a cordial acknowledgment that God is infinitely wise, holy, righteous, good and faithful in the whole of it, both in the contrivance and execution. When we add to this, their living in subjection to the Lord Jesus Christ, and their zealous labours throughout the world for bringing the nations to Christ, and the astonishing display of the Divine dispensations towards that people, presented to the wondering eyes of the whole Christian church, we may form some idea of the vast revenue of glory which will hence accrue to God.

2. Angels too will greatly rejoice at the conversion of the Jews. For "are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" When God created the world, "the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy;" how much greater will be their rejoicing when a whole nation shall be born in a day! If there be "joy in heaven amongst the angels over one sinner that repenteth," how much greater will that joy be when "the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall look unto him whom they have pierced, and mourn for it (i. e. the act of having pierced him)," "as one that mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for it, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born." Zech. xii. 10.

But let us consider more particularly the beneficial effects which the conversion of the Jews will have both upon themselves and upon the whole human race. Their conversion to God will be the commencement of true happiness, the greatest felicity to their own souls. The misery of their present state is truly deplorable, as has already been shown; but, by receiving the Gospel of Christ, and believing in the name of the Son of God, how happy will they become! Blessed with the forgiveness of sins, enjoying peace of conscience, renewed in the spirit of their minds, and daily tasting the sweetness of communion with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, they will be introduced into a new world, and find, under the dominion of the

Messiah, a happiness unknown to them before. And to all this happiness will be added, in the world to come, everlasting life. Having thus obtained mercy, they will prove a blessing to others also.

Nor have the Jews ceased from being a blessing, even in their present captive state. Their unparalleled sufferings, in exact fulfilment of the predictions contained in the Sacred Scriptures, have silenced the Infidel, and convinced many a sceptic of the truth of Divine Revelation.

Now, if in their present dispersed and degraded condition, they are still a light to shine in darkness, how much clearer will that light be, and how much stronger those evidences arising from the fulfilment of those many predictions relating to the restoration and conversion of my dear people? The conversion of a Jew, in his present abject condition, is generally ascribed to sinister motives; but, when the Jews are brought back to their own land, rebuild their city and their temple, and enjoy all that for 1800 years they longed for, and after that, voluntarily give up all as vanity, and less than vanity, and believe in the name of that Jesus, whom they have so long bated and blasphemed, and trust in his righteousness alone for salvation, to what other cause will such a change be ascribed, but to "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, as the wisdom and power of God unto salvation?"

What Providence most distinctly intimates, prophecy most unequivocally confirms.

That the Jews, after their conversion, will prove a greater blessing to the world at large than they have ever been before, is clearly and positively declared in the Word of God. The Apostle not only assures us that the conversion of the Jews is possible and certain, but he also declares that their restoration will prove a more extensive means of the conversion of the Gentiles than their dispersion has been. For he thus reasons, "I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid; but *rather*, through their fall, salvation, *is come* unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now, if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness? For, if the casting away of them be the reconciling

of the world, what *shall* the receiving of *them be*, but life from the dead?" Rom. xi. 11, 12, 15.

I now come to consider the last part of my subject:

THE FINAL RESTORATION AND CONVERSION OF THE JEWS. That the Jewish nation will be delivered from their present captive state, and advanced to a greater degree of happiness and honour than they have ever enjoyed, is acknowledged by all who believe the Bible. But very diverse are their opinions respecting the nature of that deliverance, and the means by which it is to be effected. Many divines suppose that the Jews will be converted to Christ in their present dispersed state by the usual means of grace, and then be mixed with Christians so as to be no longer known as a distinct people. Others are of opinion that they will be converted in their dispersed state, and, after that, return to their own land, and be still preserved a distinct people; but there are not a few who believe that the nation at large will return to their own land *before* their conversion, and that a remnant will be converted who will not return with the nation, but will afterwards be carried "as a present unto the Lord of hosts of a people scattered and peeled, and from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the Lord of hosts, the Mount Zion," Isaiah lviii. 7; when the nation will be converted in a remarkable manner, as was the apostle Paul, beholding the Lord Jesus Christ. That the last of these opinions appears to be the most scriptural, I shall now endeavour to prove.

There is scarcely anything more frequently foretold than this glorious event. To quote all the passages relating to it would be an endless task: I shall therefore select but a few as a specimen. We will begin with Moses. "And I will bring the land into desolation; and your enemies that dwell therein shall be astonished at it, and I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you; and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land. The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her

Sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity; because, even because they despised my judgments, and their soul abhorred my statutes." Lev. xxvi. 32, 33, 42—45. In the preceding verses God threatens judgments to overtake our nation for their sins and disobedience to his law; and then promises that he will not utterly destroy them, but remember his covenant made with our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which covenant reads thus: "And the Lord said unto Abraham, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever." Gen. xiii. 14, 15.

Now, as the essence of the covenant made with our fathers and their *natural* posterity, was the possessing the land of Canaan literally, and as the Lord has promised he will remember the covenant during their captivity, it must mean that he will bring them again into the *literal* Canaan. What else can be the meaning of these words, "and I will remember the land," but this, that God would put an end to its desolation, by restoring it to its ancient inhabitants, to be cultivated and replenished by them?

It is a poor evasion, to say that this promise was fulfilled at their return from Babylon, because the restoration to their own land for a few ages, and a subsequent dispersion for near four times as long a period, among all nations, without any hopes of return, can never be the true meaning of giving that land to the seed of Abraham *for ever*.

I will next call your attention to the prophecy in Deut. xxx. 1—6. "And it shall come to pass when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind amongst all nations whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice, according to all that I command thee this day, thou, and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; that then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and will have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee.

If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost part of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee. And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." Now, that this is a prediction yet to be fulfilled in the *literal restoration* of my beloved people to their own land, and that *afterward* they shall be truly *converted* to God, will evidently appear, if we consider that it has never had its fulfilment. It is inapplicable to their return from the Babylonian captivity, during which time they were very far from being scattered among *all* people, from one end of the earth to the other. Neither can it be said that the hearts of the people were generally circumcised, so that they loved God with all their heart and all their soul, during the interval of their return from Babylon and their being scattered by Titus; for the rabbins themselves, as well as Josephus, say, that our nation, at the time of the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans were more wicked than ever, and that therefore the coming of the Messiah was delayed until they shall repent; nor has the other promise been realized, ver. 5, "to do them good, and to multiply them above their fathers." Consider next, that it is allowed by all, that at least many of the calamities in ch. 27—30 were inflicted literally on our nation soon after their dispersion by Titus, why should not the blessing of deliverance and restoration to the land which "our fathers possessed, and shall possess," be literally fulfilled?

It appears then that our people will return literally to the land in an *unconverted* state; for the circumcision of the heart, or true conversion to God, is to succeed their restoration to the land. It is of great importance to remember this *order* established by God himself; for you must know that there are not a few who grant that this prediction has not been fulfilled, but will be accomplished in the conversion of the Jews wherever they are; and that to be gathered to the land of Canaan, "the land which our

fathers did possess," is not to be understood literally, but allegorically of *heaven*; of which Canaan was a type. True, Canaan was a type of heaven; but does God promise to gather them "out of all people from one end of the earth to the other, and bring them into heaven?" What, *before* their hearts are circumcised to love him? Has Christ changed the order of things? Has it now become possible for sinners to enter the kingdom of God *without* being born of the Spirit? Consider also, that surely the land which Abraham could "see with his eyes," and "in which he was a stranger," the land in which Isaac "sojourned," the land on which Jacob "lay," must be the very land of Canaan itself, and no other place in heaven or earth. But these are the terms which the Lord employs to define the promised land, that land which he promised to the patriarchs, "and their seed for ever, for an everlasting possession." Besides, what does it mean when God adds, "I will multiply them above their fathers?" And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers." (Deut. xxx. 5.) Is this applicable to the inhabitants of heaven? No, it is the Canaan once possessed, which they shall possess again.

In Ezekiel xxxvi. 25. 27. you will find a promise of temporal and spiritual blessings. The spiritual blessings consist in regeneration and reconciliation with God. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them:" amongst the temporal blessings promised, is, first their return to their own land, which is to *precede* their regeneration, agreeably to the order, ver. 25; then, i. e., after having been "gathered out of all countries and brought into their own land," ver. 24, then they shall experience the change of heart promised.

Now, whatever partial fulfilment this prophecy may have had at the return of



our fathers from Babylon, it is very evident that a far more complete accomplishment of it is to take place in future. For in verse 11, the promise is that God would do better unto them than at their beginning; but it is a fact well known, that the outward condition of our people was never so prosperous after the captivity as it had been before that catastrophe: the land, instead of being like the garden of Eden, the admiration of men, has become the habitation of owls, and the dwelling place of wild beasts. Further, the persons to be restored are repeatedly said to have blasphemed the name of the Lord amongst the heathen; but this character is not applicable to our fathers in the Babylonish captivity; instead of being profane they seem to have been so conscientious as not to sing the song of Zion in a strange land.

Again, in verse 12, &c. it is promised, that the land should never be bereaved of its inhabitants; but, since the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, very few of our people have lived in the land of our fathers. Further, this people is to be gathered out of *all* countries; but the captives of Babylon were chiefly confined to one country. This prophecy, therefore, is in perfect unison with that of Moses, which we have considered before; and they both confirm the sentiment that our nation, however scattered in all countries, will return to the land which our fathers did possess; then, as a nation, they will be converted to God, and clothe themselves in dust and ashes; then the Lord will do them good, better than heretofore.

I agree, that the spiritual blessings promised in these predictions are applicable to the conversion of every sinner, whether Jew or Gentile; but the circumstances mentioned before and after the spiritual change, in ver. 25.—27, ought to lead us to be just before we are charitable; i. e. we ought to apply them first *literally*, as a promise to the natural descendants of Jacob, and then use them as an *illustration* of the nature of the conversion of every other sinner. The persons to whom the promise primarily belongs, are such as have dwelt in the land of our fathers, but have been driven out for a *season*, because of their sins; but for the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Jehovah will gather them again, and bring them into their

land, and they are to possess it *for ever*. This character, therefore, is not applicable to every sinner.

Hosea iii. 4, 5. “For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: afterward shall the children of Israel return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days.”

That this precious prophecy was not fulfilled at the return of my people from the Babylonish captivity, but is yet to be accomplished, is evident from the following consideration:—

That by “David their king,” is meant the promised Messiah, is acknowledged by almost all the Rabbins, and by almost all Christian divines.

Now, it is a fact too well known to need proof, that my people, after their return from Babylon, were so far from “seeking the Lord their God, and David their king, and fearing the Lord and his goodness,” that they grew worse and worse, till they had filled up the measure of their iniquity in crucifying the Lord of glory, and rejecting the offers of mercy through that very precious blood which they had imprecated upon themselves and their children, and for which the wrath of God has come upon them, and continued to the present day.

Hence, I observe further, that the prediction of their return cannot yet have been accomplished, because their calamities have not yet ended. How remarkably striking has been the fulfilment of the former part of this prediction! For many centuries past, my dear people have not been a body politic, having no rule and dominion among themselves; they have no *king* nor *prince* of their own: the *sceptre* is departed from them; neither is any *sacrifice* offered by them, for their daily sacrifice has ceased; and what is very remarkable, although my people were once very prone to idolatrous worship, as their history shows, yet it is well known that there is not now an image among them,—and for this reason, many of my brethren, who, at their conversion, joined the Roman Catholics, as soon as they became acquainted with their image worship, left them and joined the Protestants.

Now, since it must be acknowledged,



and actually is by most divines, that the former part of this prophecy has been fulfilled and is still fulfilling, both with respect to Judah and Ephraim, it follows that the second part is also to be fulfilled, after they *return* to seek the Lord. Besides, it is expressly said that the children of Israel should be, for *many days* deprived of their privileges, and that they shall seek the Lord in the *latter days*. Both Jewish and Christian commentators agree that the latter days refer to the coming of the Messiah, and therefore this could not have been fulfilled before the coming of Jesus; and I have already shown that my people did not receive him as "David their king."

Jer. xxxi. 31. 40. "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, &c."

Although this prediction respecting a New Covenant is applied by the apostle (Heb. viii.) to the commencement of the New Testament dispensation, and was actually made or established by the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus; and although the blessings of this covenant are the same as are enjoyed by every converted sinner, yet literally and more fully it respects my nation, with whom the other covenant had been made when God brought them out of Egypt. Nor was this prediction fulfilled in the conversion of my brethren in the apostolic time, for, however many of them may have been converted, they all have been mixed with the converts of other nations; but the promise in this prophecy is the conversion, not of a few or many, "but the whole house of Israel and the house of Judah," ver. 31, "the nation," ver. 36, just as the covenant of Sinai had been made with the nation—"They shall all know me, from the least unto the greatest of them," ver. 34. Further, this promise was made to the ten tribes as well as to the house of Judah. Long before the giving of this promise, my people were divided into two parts. The one of them, in a way of distinction from the other, retained the name of *Israel*. These were the *ten tribes* which fell off from the house of David, under the conduct of *Ephraim*; whence they are often also in the prophets called by that name. The other, consisting of the tribe properly so called, with that of *Benjamin* and the greatest part of *Levi*, took the name of

*Judah*, and afterwards was called the *Jews*, and with them the promise remained in a peculiar manner. But whereas they all originally sprang from Abraham, who received the promise for them all, and because they were all equally, in their forefather, brought into the bond of the old covenant, they are here mentioned distinctly, that none of the seed of Abraham might be excluded from the tender of this covenant. Hence, unto the whole seed of Abraham according to the flesh, it was that this covenant was first to be offered. So Peter tells them in his first sermon, that the promise was unto them and their children who were there present, i. e. *the house of Judah*, and to them that are afar off, i. e. *the house of Israel*, or the *ten tribes*, in their dispersion. Acts ii. 39. It appears therefore plainly, that the promise is yet to be fulfilled in the conversion of the ten tribes as well as the house of Judah. Besides, at that time "the city shall be built, which shall not be plucked up or thrown down any more for ever," ver. 38, 40.

The last prediction I shall name is that by the prophet Zechariah, xii. 10—14, "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, &c. Now it is evident that no such repentance and faith, such general and particular mourning for piercing Christ, has ever taken place amongst my dear people; nor has the preceding part of the chapter, closely connected with the prediction under consideration, been fulfilled. Jerusalem must first be rebuilt, before it is besieged by the united power of many kings, who shall then be destroyed in a miraculous manner. I conclude, therefore, that this is a prophecy concerning the future restoration of my nation to the literal land of Canaan; that they will rebuild the city Jerusalem; that they will afterwards be besieged by many nations, who shall be destroyed by God himself: and in that day Judah and Israel shall be converted unto God.

The wonderful preservation of my people as a distinct nation, is an argument in favor of their return to their own land. It has been foretold by Moses and the prophets, that though they shall be dispersed among all nations, yet they should not be totally destroyed, but still subsist

as a distinct people. Read carefully, the following passages: Lev. xxvi. 44; Numb. xxiii. 9; Jer. xxx. 11; Amos ix. 8. My beloved nation, like the bush of Moses, hath been always burning, but it is never consumed. And what a marvellous thing it is, that after so many wars, battles, and sieges, after so many fires, famines, and pestilences, after so many years of captivity, slavery, and misery, they are not destroyed utterly, and though scattered among all people, yet subsist as a distinct people by themselves. Where is anything comparable to this to be found in all the histories and in all the nations under the sun?

As another argument, I would simply remind you of the general expectation of my people to return to the land of their fathers. This desire is interwoven in all their prayers for the festivals, especially on the feast of the passover, when it is said repeatedly, "This year we are here, at the next year we shall be in the land of Isreal." Now, I cannot but hope that these prayers are "the prayers of faith," i. e. believing the many promises of God on this subject. Consider also that they are so situated that at the shortest notice they are ready and able to depart as easily as when they came out of Egypt. They have no country they call their own besides the land of Canaan; they are strangers and sojourners as their fathers were; they have no landed property to dispose of; they do not intermarry with other nations, so as to be detained by attachments to relations, friends, or possessions. Thus God makes "the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder thereof he will restrain." Nay, their former enemies will become their friends, and help them in their way to their original possession.

I shall mention one more argument in favor of the *speedy* return of the Jews to their land, viz. the removal of the obstacles out of their way. Not only are *they* prepared by the remarkable hand of Providence to return at a moment's warning, but the way is also preparing for them. The great river Euphrates is drying up; the once terrible Turkish empire is crumbling into pieces; and the determined time "for the land to be trodden under foot by the Gentiles" is near its close; and kings talk of becoming their nursing fathers, and queens their nursing mothers.

But if the Jews return to their own land, will they rebuild the city of Jerusalem? Will they have a temple, altar, sacrifice, and priest?

First, as it respects Jerusalem, there can be no reasonable doubt in the mind of those who will be guided by the plain Word of God. Almost in every passage, where the restoration of the Jews to their own land is mentioned, the building of the city of Jerusalem, in its own place, is also mentioned. Read only the following predictions: Jer. xxx. 8—11, 18; xxxi. 38—40; Zech. xii. 1—8. Nor ought we to lose sight of the prediction of the blessed Jesus himself, who said, "And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled," Luke xxi. 24; which evidently implies that when the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled Jerusalem shall no longer be trodden down, but be rebuilt and inhabited again by her own people.

Why should it be thought strange to believe that my Jewish brethren who have, for nearly eighteen hundred years, most conscientiously observed all the religious rites which God gave to our fathers, in all countries, amongst all people, and under all circumstances, as far as the law of God allows them to observe them in a strange land, although these observances exposed them to reproach, hatred, persecution, and death itself, would, when they are brought back by the wonderful goodness of God, to the land which God gave to our fathers, build again a temple for the worship of God, erect an altar unto the Lord, and offer up their sacrifices, and observe all their ceremonies which they observed before their dispersion by the Romans? Did they not do so after their return from the Babylonish captivity? How strange and unaccountable would it appear if my people, who, whilst the chastening hand of God was upon them for ages, were, notwithstanding, steadfast and immovable in worshipping that God, should cast off all their religious profession, love, and attachment to him, when he has performed his promises in delivering them out of their captivity, and brought them back to the goodly land? Would not such a supposition charge them with "having denied the faith, and become worse than infidels?"

Now, my dear friends, having given you a historical account of the origin and

progress of the present Christian efforts to promote the conversion of the Jews; enforced the duty of Christians to aid in promoting the salvation of Israel; answered the objections generally stated to avoid this duty; and proved the conversion of Judah and Israel: may I not hope that you are anxiously inquiring, "In what way *nin* I aid this good cause?" Your pecuniary aid, if ever so small, will be thankfully received; by your conversation, with a just and kind treatment, you may be very useful; but above all, by your

fervent prayer you may bring down the "Spirit of grace and supplication upon the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem."

And when we enter our closet, surround a family altar, or worship in the sanctuary, and remember that our prayers must be presented to the Father by the dear Mediator who is of the seed of Abraham, and is not ashamed to call the Jews his brethren, let us not forget to pray for the poor outcasts of Israel, and the dispersed of Judah.

We refer those who wish to see a fuller statement of the Missionary labours of the Rev. Mr. FREY, and to follow out the arguments more fully, which are glanced at in the foregoing statement, to two very interesting works published by him—"Joseph and Benjamin," containing the whole controversy between Jews and Christians—and "Judah and Israel," in which he has collected all the prophecies from the Old Testament, concerning the future restoration and conversion of the Jews. Having perused them with much pleasure and interest ourselves, we think those to whom the cause of Israel is dear, will do so with similar satisfaction. A few copies can be had at the Office of the "Jews Society," 16, Upper Sackville-street, Dublin.

## LINES

WRITTEN ON HEARING THAT A CHURCH WAS TO BE BUILT IN JERUSALEM.

"I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids, until I find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob," *Psa. cxxxii. 4, 5.*

Oh! where is the Temple, Jerusalem's pride,  
The glory and wonder of years—  
That seemed 'mid destruction adorn'd as a bride  
And call'd forth the conqueror's tears?  
'Tis stricken—'tis fallen, and plough'd as a field,  
Not a stone on another is left;  
The judgment pronounc'd is on Zion fulfill'd—  
"She sits as a widow bereft."  
Yet is she all desolate! hath she no sound—  
No songs of devotion to raise?  
Shall the hill of Jerusalem silent be found,  
While our Islands are vocal with praise?  
Oh, Zion! thy hill shall not silent remain  
We haste, on that long hallow'd sod  
An altar to raise to the Lamb that was slain,  
A temple to build to our God—  
Where the children of Judah may haply be led  
From the error and darkness that shrouds,  
To trust in the Lamb that on Calvary bled,  
To look for their Lord in the clouds.

*Killarney.*

C——.

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# THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

## GOSPEL PREACHER.

"We preach Christ crucified—

"Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God."—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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REV. J. N. LOMBARD.

REV. E. D. RHODES.

CONSCIENCE,

### A SERMON

BY THE REV. JOHN NEWMAN LOMBARD, A. M.,

Rector of Carrigaline, Diocese of Cork.

ACTS, xxiv. 16.

"And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.

SCRIPTURE and experience testify of the depravity of man's heart. The Bible declares that the heart of man is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," that "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually;" (Gen. vi. 5.)—and experience sadly proves the same awful and solemn truth, in all the ungodliness, superstition, infidelity and vice, which we see around us. And in proportion as we have deep or superficial views of the depravity of man's heart, in the same proportion shall we have low or exalted views of the Son and of the Spirit of God; for, just as under the reality and danger of a bodily

disease, the need of a physician is felt—so is the Great Physician estimated, as we are made acquainted with that spiritual disease which "worketh death"—death temporal, death spiritual, and death eternal.

Now, my brethren, in the moral ruin in which man is involved, by reason of the fall, CONSCIENCE presents a profitable and interesting field of enquiry and meditation; and on this important subject we would desire, under the guidance of God's Holy Spirit, to occupy your attention, to the glory of God and the spiritual profit of man, and to seek, in endeavouring "rightly to divide the word of truth,"

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to maintain a "conscience void of offence toward God and toward men."

When St. Paul spoke the words of the text, he was defending himself against the false accusations brought against him by Tertullus, before Felix, at Cæsarea; and in making a profession of the faith as it is in Christ Jesus, and especially when pressing the great and glorious doctrine of the resurrection, (which, in connection with the second advent of our blessed Lord, is the bright hope of the Church,) he says, particularly, respecting it, "herein do I exercise myself to have a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men," thus showing the close connection that subsists between the great doctrine of the resurrection and holiness of life; and this union we see maintained in many other portions of Scripture also, and especially in the 15th chapter of St. Paul's 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, and last verse, where the Apostle, after dwelling fully on the Lord's second coming, and the glories of the first resurrection, adds, "therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

We would speak then—

#### I.—ON THE NATURE OF CONSCIENCE.

*Conscience* is that wonderful and mysterious principle which dwells in man, and which has been thus ably, though concisely, defined by the indefatigable Cruden, who, like Apollos of old, was "mighty in the Scriptures"—"Conscience is the testimony and secret judgment of the soul, which gives its approbation to actions that it thinks good, or reproaches itself with those which it believes to be evil."

*Conscience*, however, is not an unerring

guide, as to what is really right or really wrong; but when a *rule* of right or wrong, be it what it may, be established, it gives its judgment whether actions are in accordance with, or opposed to it; and hence we see the value of the Word of God, as an unerring rule of duty; however man may err and stray, God's Word remains like its great Author, infallibly the same, and "able to make wise unto salvation, through faith that is in Christ Jesus." But as respects conscience, even when a right rule is presented to it, it gives no aid in performing what that rule demands, but, like the law of the ten commandments, which announces the will of God, declares the penalties of disobedience, and there leaves the sinner as helpless as before.

So *conscience* testifies against the soul, but gives no aid in bringing it into subjection to the rule that has been laid down for its guidance and its law. And this shows us the need and importance of the holy Spirit of God; for, without his aid, the Bible would be of no saving value to the soul. The law might pronounce its thunders, and the gospel "whisper peace," but without the Holy Ghost to move *upon* and *within* man's heart, the salvation of the gospel would be unto him but as "sounding brass or as a tinkling cymbal." How mysterious then, is this principle of conscience, which dwells within man! It makes the stoutest heart to tremble. He who does not dread the cannon's roar, quails before this secret tribunal. It was its terrifying power which startled and alarmed the ungodly Felix, when hearing the address even of the prisoner Paul; for we read in the same chapter whence the

text is taken, that "as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled," under the infliction of the truth, and like many a heart beside, that carries on bravely before the world's eye, he suffered the withering pangs of a gnawing and remorseful conscience.

We would consider—

## II.—THE DIFFERENT STATES OF CONSCIENCE IN THE UNGODLY AND THE GODLY.

First, as to the *ungodly*—they have a conscience which sometimes they yield to, and sometimes they endeavour to quench; but it haunts them still;—day and night it raises its threatening and warning voice—it speaks in the giddy vortex of the world's sinfulness and frivolity, as well as in the silence and retirement of the closet, when "none but God is near." Sometimes the conscience becomes alarmed and convicted, but not by the Spirit of God, many instances of which we find recorded in the sacred Scriptures; as, for instance, in 1 Sam. xv. 24. where we read, "And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord and thy words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice." Here Saul's conscience was *alarmed* and *convicted*, but it was not the saving work of God's Spirit on his soul, for he afterwards fell by his own sword in the awful act of suicide. We have another state of conscience similar to this recorded in John viii. 9. in reference to the woman taken in adultery, where it is said, "and they which heard it being *convicted* by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest even unto the last, and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst." And here we would

observe, that it has been well and forcibly remarked, that this incident of our blessed Lord's life powerfully displays the wisdom of our great Master. Consider the circumstances under which he was placed. The Scribes and Pharisees brought a woman, taken in adultery, for our Lord's decision on her case, appealing to the law of Moses respecting this sin, which they did for the purpose of "tempting him, that they might have to accuse him." It would appear that there were but four ways in which he could deal with her, viz.—1st, to acquit her, and then he would have been accused as a patron of sin; 2dly, to condemn her, and then he might have been represented as acting against the authority of Cæsar; 3dly, to dismiss the matter without comment, and this might be construed into an indifference to his Father's honour; or, 4thly, he might have referred it to another tribunal. If he referred it to the Roman authority, it would have been acknowledging a foreign usurpation—if he referred it to a Jewish decision, it would have been said that he was setting himself up against the Roman power; but he did none of these things;—and what did he do?—he made an appeal to the *conscience* of the accusers, which acted with such power upon them that they all withdrew, and "left Jesus alone, and the woman standing in the midst;" and at the close of this interesting scene, Jesus said unto her, "Go, and sin no more."

Sometimes the *conscience* of the *ungodly* becomes *perverted*. This was the case with Saul of Tarsus, when he went "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord," and thinking, under the influence of a perverted conscience, that persecuting the

Church was "doing God service." It was this same state of conscience which caused the chief priests to refuse the thirty pieces of silver, because it was "the price of blood," while they made no scruple of persecuting Christ to death. The same principle caused the Jews to be unwilling that "the bodies should remain on the cross on the Sabbath day," and yet we find no remorse on their parts after raising the murderous cry, "crucify him, crucify him!" The heathens show this state of conscience, in sacrificing their children, and perpetrating many acts of iniquity and cruelty, in the cause of their religion; and so do many misguided and benighted Romanists who are scrupulous about meats, and days, and seasons, while they neglect the weightier matters of the law, mercy, temperence, honesty and truth.

Sometimes the conscience of the ungodly is driven to *despair*. This was the state of the wretched Judas, who went and hanged himself, under the agonising self-reproach of having "betrayed the innocent blood."

And sometimes the conscience becomes *scared*; and this state is referred to in 1 Tim. iv. 2. where we read of those who had "their conscience *scared* with a hot iron;" and this is a most sad, awful, and ruinous condition. When even this natural monitor is altogether silenced, then the soul runs on headlong to its ruin, despising all divine authority, drinking in iniquity like water, neither fearing God nor regarding man, and given over altogether to a reprobate mind; and though all do not run to the same excess of riot as other men, yet this state of conscience may be found amongst the profane, the sensual, the worldly-

mind, the self-righteous, and the hypocritical professors; and hence the conscience of the ungodly is called, in the Word of God, a "defiled and evil conscience."

Next we would speak as to a *good conscience*;—and what can make the conscience good? It only becomes good as it is influenced by God's "good Spirit," and "sprinkled by the blood of Jesus;" then it is that persons really make a "conscience of their ways"—then it is that they truly desire to have a "conscience void of offence toward God and toward men"—then it is that the soul becomes attracted to a right object, namely, a triune God; regulated by a right rule, viz., the Word of Truth, and directed to a right end, namely, the glory of God;—then the "*conscience* becomes sensitive, like the eye which perceives the least mote of impurity, and will not cease to weep until it be washed away;" in a word, it becomes the barometer of the soul, which rises or falls in proportion to the declining of the soul from, or the advancing of the soul to, a conformity to the will of God. It is here that Satan makes his heaviest attacks on the people of God. He rarely succeeds in drawing them into gross and open sin, and therefore he seeks to misguide the sensitive conscience, and, "transforming himself into an angel of light," sows the seeds of discord and disunion in the Church of God, and persuades those whom he may succeed thus far in deluding, that they "cause divisions" for conscience sake, while, as has been well observed, they thus "sacrifice unity at the supposed shrine of purity," and thus also cause many weaker brethren to offend.

We would speak lastly—

### III.—ON OUR DUTY TOWARDS CONSCIENCE.

As regards the unconverted we would say, quench not its strivings; it often warns you; seek a right rule for its regulation, namely, the holy oracles of God. Search those Scriptures prayerfully, which testify of Him who is “the way, the truth, and the life,” and who gives this gracious invitation, “come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest,” and whose precious Word declares that his “blood cleanseth from all sin,” and that his righteousness is “to all and upon all that believe.” Yield yourselves to God’s Spirit, who alone can establish faith in your hearts, (and without faith it is impossible to please God,) whose preventing, sustaining, and comforting power must begin, continue, and complete the work of grace in the soul; and seek by God’s Spirit and God’s Word, to have “a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men.”

And as respects God’s people, we would say, it is your duty to cultivate a *tenderness*, but not a *sickliness*, of conscience; a tender conscience will act like a faithful sentinel, giving warning of the enemy’s approach, and will prayerfully use all God’s appointed means and ordinances for the sanctification of the soul. A sickly conscience will overestimate matters of minor importance to the subversion of unity, and it will not give adequate weight to the cardinal points of Christianity—repentance, faith, and holiness. If, my brethren, you be in doubt, as to any path of duty, or point of doctrine, ask wis-

dom of God, through the intercession of his dear Son, who has promised his Holy Spirit to them that ask him: and as God carries on his purposes of love through human instrumentality, ask counsel of his experienced, sanctified, sober-minded ministers and people; and strive, like the needle to the pole, (notwithstanding its occasional tremulousness,) to have your souls, by God’s Spirit, continually directed to, and guided by, the great polar star of our salvation, Christ Jesus our Lord.

Having thus spoken—1st, On the nature of conscience—2nd, On the different states of conscience in the godly and the ungodly—3rd, On our duty towards conscience, in reference both to the converted and the unconverted, we would conclude by a few words of—

ADDRESS TO THOSE WHO MAY BE CARELESS OF THEIR SOULS. Your conscience is the only assailable ground for the ministers of the Gospel. If they fail to affect your conscience, they can make no impression upon your souls: and as God is often pleased to use and to bless human appeals, we would say to you, look into your souls this day. Have you not offended God in thought, in word, and in deed? Have not your thoughts been sinful, unbelieving, and impure? Have not your words been idle, and thoughtless, if not profane? And have not your deeds of transgression been more numerous than the hairs of your head? Compare this state with the requirements of God’s law, which declares that the “thoughts must be brought into captivity, and into the obedience of Christ;” which states that “for every idle word, men shall have to give account;” and which



proclaims that "cursed is every one, who continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." And what is left for you to ensure salvation, under such accumulated transgression of word, thought, and deed, but to "repent and believe the Gospel." How cheering to the penitent soul, are the glad tidings of the Gospel? The Gospel proclaims a full, a free, and an everlasting salvation to every believing soul; though sins be of a scarlet and crimson dye, they can all be washed away by faith in a Saviour's blood; though the soul could not presume to stand before the Lord, clothed in the flimsy garb of man's own righteousness, yet the "robe of Christ is ever new;" his perfect, spotless obedience to the holy law of God, from his first entrance on, to his departure from, this evil world, becomes the justifying righteousness of every believing child of God; the human obedience of Christ having been stamped with inestimable value, by the impress of his divine nature, forms a title and a garment of salvation, in which

every believer can stand faultless even before the scrutinising eye of a holy God—for there is "no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Come, then, my friends to the foot of the cross—"behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world"—"believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved;" his Holy Spirit is given without money and without price to those who seek that saving power, through faith in his most holy name; unless the glorious Gospel of the blessed God illumine our minds and sanctify our hearts, we can neither be safe nor happy; but when "justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

May God, by his mighty power, sovereign grace, and unmerited love, so influence our hearts and minds, that we may be enabled to acquire, and when acquired, to maintain "a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men." Amen.

SALVATION BY GRACE,

## A SERMON

PREACHED IN THE EPISCOPAL CHAPEL, UPPER BAGGOT-STREET, DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY, APRIL, 14, 1839,

ON BEHALF OF THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

BY THE REV. E. D. RHODES, B.D.

Rector of Earmington, and Curate of West Teignmouth, Devon.

EPHESIANS ii. part of 5th verse.

“By grace ye are saved.”

THERE is a peculiar emphasis laid on these words by the Apostle. He introduces them in the passage before us, once in the way of parenthesis, interrupting his statement; and afterwards in the way of strong direct assertion, proving and confirming that statement.

The Apostle is describing the process of salvation; he is showing how the same work which God wrought in Christ by his mighty power, he was working also by the same power in the body of Christ, which is his Church. He is showing how that the same mighty power of God which quickened the body of Christ, hath quickened his Church with him—that as God hath raised up Christ, he hath raised up his Church with him—that as God hath exalted Christ, he hath exalted his Church with him—that as God would bring Christ again to display his glory, so, in the ages to come, the Church shall show forth the exceeding grace of God: and, in the course of this, the Apostle says once, “by grace ye are saved,” and in the conclusion of this, he repeats again, “for by grace ye are saved, through faith, and that, not of

yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.” Brethren, were I to select from the whole Scripture, a word of God which might serve as a text and motto for a Christian’s life, I would choose these few words, “by grace ye are saved;” for it would be of universal use, of universal application, for conviction of sin—for instruction in righteousness—for consolation and strength—for encouragement and support in trial—for hope and abiding consolation.

We are not called on, dear friends, merely to consider the salvation of the heathen; no, by the Lord’s blessing, I would call on you to consider your own salvation. Only let us properly consider this; let us trace it in its cause—in its operation—in its results; and we shall see clearly, that the grace of God is the cause, and God the working power, and that the grace of God has the whole glory of the result. Let us only magnify God’s grace in our own salvation, and we shall surely labour to extend the blessing of that grace for the salvation of others.

*What, then, is the cause? To what*

cause do we attribute the salvation of the sinner? Surely, the answer is a simple one—salvation to God. Brethren, I will not waste words to prove this; I will not suspect or suppose it possible that there can be a person here, who would attribute the work of salvation to any other cause, or any other origin, but the Most High God; it were to deny the very being of God, to refer this to any other cause. If we will derive good from any other source—if we will bring in an independent origin or independent cause, for any single blessing we have, besides the God whom we serve,—in so doing, we deny that God altogether; for he is no God at all, if he be not “God over all, blessed for ever,” “through whom, and from whom, and by whom, are all things.” Salvation, then, to God, and salvation by grace—salvation, the work, the entire work of the whole Godhead; salvation by the Father—salvation by the Son—salvation by the Holy Ghost—by the grace of each, by the grace of all.

It was, brethren, in the counsels of the eternal God, that the plan of salvation was made and proposed. It was in the wisdom and the power of the Most High God, that the whole counsel and purpose originated; and was not this the counsel and purpose of Christ? for, when the Father proposed and planned man’s salvation—when he would not that a sinner should perish, but that all should turn to him and live—at what a price, and by what means, did he seek to accomplish this his purpose, and this his will? We are not concerned now, brethren, to inquire why it was so; it is only before us to assert, that so it was; that when God designed and proposed the salvation of mankind, he did not

effect that salvation merely by the assertion of almighty power—by the declaration of his sovereign will—by speaking and it was done—by commanding and it came to pass;—no, for “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that we should not perish, but have everlasting life,”—it was by giving up his own, his only, his beloved Son;—this was the method and this was the price by which the Father contrived, and by which the Father purchased, the redemption of the world; and, brethren, is there not grace in this?

Oh! I would speak to you of God as of a man; I would speak of his feelings and of the movements of his heart, as if they were human feelings and a human heart, because it is for this reason that God has taken upon him a human relation, that he has called himself a father, even that he might give his creatures liberty to understand him in this human sense, and to think of him as they would think of their fellow-creature, only altogether perfect. Therefore, when we speak of God’s love in giving his only begotten Son, and when we estimate the price of that gift, we are warranted in accounting for it as we would of a similar gift on the part of a man like ourselves. You have heard, perhaps, of a Roman, in the days of old, who passed sentence on his child, and ordered him for execution; and when his son intreated him, and when his colleague in office importuned him, and when the people themselves besought the father to have pity on his own child, that father refused their prayer and said, “Lictors do your duty.” And was it because he loved his child less than a stranger loved him? was it because he pitied him less than others

pitied him?—or, was it not rather that when he loved his son much, he loved his country more? and it was at a price so great as that, and at no less a price, that he would vindicate that country's honor, and her violated laws. You have heard of another father who had one child, only and dearly beloved; the child of many prayers—the child of much patience—the child of promise—the child of hope—the delight of his old age—the joy of his heart; you have heard, how that father led out that child to sacrifice, and when the young man walked by him in the confidence and joy of youth, and as they went both of them together, and as they talked both of them together, and the heart of one was as the echo of the heart of the other,—do you think that the father did not love that child?—and when he laid him on the altar, and when he lifted up his hand to slay him, was it that he did not pity that child—or was it not that, whereas he loved his Isaac much, he loved his God more? And, brethren, does not patriotism in the heathen, and does not this devotedness in the patriarch teach us the measure and nature, as far as human signs and earthly shadows can teach us—and explain to us the height and depth of that love which passeth knowledge, which God the Father showed, when “he spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all?” and can we think of this, and question for a moment the assertion, “by grace ye are saved?” “Remember,” said the Apostle, “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be rich.”

Brethren, how rich was the Son of God!—how poor did he become! Oh! we will not dwell on his riches or glory, which he had with the Father before the would was, and which he forsook when he came down on earth to dwell among us. We will not enlarge or dwell on these things: thought and time would fail us for any thing like a right consideration of them. But we will think a little of his poverty. Oh! did he not become poor, when he was born of a poor woman in a manger, laid among the beasts, with none but the angels to care for him? Did he not become poor, when he grew up the child and son of a carpenter, altogether undistinguished, among the poor and mean of this world—labouring, most probably with his hands to gain his own livelihood? And did he not become poor when he walked a houseless stranger among the families of the earth, when he could say, “the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head?” And did he not become poor, when he was despised of all, and the outcast of all, and when every man's hand was against him, and when he was robbed and stripped in his heart and affections,—when his friend betrayed, and his friends forsook him,—and when he was left altogether alone to encounter the world's spite and the world's scorn, and the world's cruelty, and all the fiery darts of the wicked one? And was it not poverty to be cast out and nailed to the cross, and accounted as a malefactor, and spitted on, and reviled in his last agonies?—Oh! did he not become poor?

But, brethren, this was not his poverty;



this was but the outward marks and signs of his poverty : but his true poverty had a deeper seat than this ; for, when he foresaw all this—when he had endured much, and none knew how much he had to endure—when the last dark hour was before him, and he had weighed well the trial, yea, had calculated all the bitterness of the cup he had to drink—when he knew he should be forsaken, stripped, and left alone, he said, “ yet, I am not alone ; for my father is with me.” And when, brethren, that Father forsook him, when God’s countenance was hidden from him—when heaven was closed and darkened over him—when he called, and there was no answer, yea, even to God when he called, and there was no blessing—when he was abandoned of his God, and cried out, “ my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ”—Oh ! was he not poor indeed ? This shows the depths into which our Lord’s spirit went, in order to lay hold of man’s fallen spirit, and ransom it from death.

And, what was it which brought down the Lord from heaven ?—what was it that emptied him of his glory ?—what was it that identified him with the poor and mean and wretched ones of the earth ?—what was it that nailed him to the cross, and separated him from his God ; that brought him into the grave and place of departed spirits, when “ he bowed his head and gave up the ghost ? ” what was it that could accomplish this—that had might and power thus to darken the sun in the heavens, thus to bring down life to death, to bring a cloud over the light of glory ?—what was it ? It was “ love that is stronger than death ; ” it was “ love which much waters could not quench,” and which many floods cannot drown.

Oh ! it was the omnipotence of love which made the Lord encounter death, that he might overcome death ; which made him submit to all the floods of ungodliness and waters of sin, that he might ransom fallen man, and save him from perishing for ever. And is it not then true, that if we are saved by the Son of God, we are saved by grace ? The Lord “ ascended up on high, and led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among us ; ” and, brethren, as the fruit of the Lord’s death, and the consequence of the Lord’s ascension, the Holy Spirit of the living God has come down on earth, to live and dwell with man ; he is living in the Church and dwelling in the Church, and walking in the Church ; he is the source of all its light, and the source of all its life, and all its godliness and comfort ; yea, he is building up that Church, and making it indeed a meet habitation, a spiritual temple in which the praises of God shall sound for eternity.

And, brethren, what does the Spirit of God expect from those in whom he dwells ? Are there none who resist him ?—are there none that grieve him ?—are there none that harden their heart against his motions, and that refuse to obey his call ?—are there none who strive against his commands, and that quench his gifts and his power, and that come short of his grace and blessing ? Are there none that refuse him the honor that belongs to him, and that bring not forth the fruit which he looks for ? Is there, brethren, no ill return which the Holy Ghost receives from the Church in which he dwells ? Has he the honor, the glory,

the fruitfulness,—has he the abundant return of life and light and hope and joy which he ought to have? Or, is there not a continual complaint, that he is vexed, and that he is grieved; and if he does not leave us alone—if he does not forsake his temple on earth—if he does not cast us off, like salt that has lost its savour—if he does not give us over to destruction, and leave us to the power of the evil one, in utter ruin that we merit;—oh! is it not, friends, again from love, unchanging, immeasurable love, the love of the eternally blessed God, the grace whereby we are saved?

Let me speak briefly of the way in which salvation is applied, and the way in which the work is carried out in us and among us. If, brethren, you were to see a poor, silly sheep wandering from its fold, would you expect that sheep to return of his own accord to that fold; or do you not rather know, that the farther it goes, the farther it will go; and that, unconscious of danger, it will go far away, and not be heard of long; and if brought back, must it not be by the shepherd going out to seek it, laying it on his shoulders, and bringing it home? And, if you have been as a sheep going astray, seeking you every one his own way, and if you have been brought back to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls, is it, brethren, your own doings? or is it not rather His who has followed you into the wilderness, recalled you from your wanderings, turned you from your sins, and brought you to your home?

Stand, brethren, at the grave of Lazarus. Think of that man, quickened there, while he was lying in death—awakened there to a sense of the dark-

ness that was about him—of the corruption with which he was surrounded—of the bondage in which his grave-clothes held him;—think how he would groan under that darkness, loath that corruption, and struggle against that bondage;—and then think of the change which called him forth to light and life and liberty! And did he do it himself? did he quicken himself—raise himself—help himself—free himself?—or was it not the voice of Almighty power which said, “Lazarus, come forth!”

Brethren, we read here of a people who were quickened when they were dead in trespasses and sins—of a people who were raised up together from their death in trespasses and sins—of a people who were exalted to sit together in heavenly places with Christ Jesus; and do you remember the process of this work?—how, when the sinner’s eyes are first opened, he knows his guilt, loathes his corruption, feels his bondage and struggles with it; and how, as the work of life and salvation goes on in him, he obtains pardon for his sins, health for his corruption, deliverance from his bondage, and comes forth from the death of nature, from the evil of a wicked world, from the slavery of Satan and the flesh, into the glorious liberty of the children of God? Brethren have you known aught of this, and will you take the praise of it to yourselves—or do you not see that it is, in truth, the work of Omnipotence—that it is the work of God—that it is “by grace ye are saved?”

Oh! dear brethren, surely it is so. Follow the work of grace through all its steps and stages,—from the first anxious inquiry after pardon and peace, to the last triumphant expression of joy and

hope in believing. Take the believer in any part of his progress, is he walking in the Spirit—has he crucified the flesh—has he overcome the world—is he causing his light to shine before men, that his Father may be glorified in him? And, brethren, not more impossible were it that Peter on the water, with the winds howling and the waves roaring, should have maintained his standing there, and walked out in peace and security on a tempestuous ocean, than it were for this man to uphold his ways in righteousness in this troublous and wicked world, unless the might and power of God had delivered him.

And oh! then, brethren, look a little further—look to the results of this salvation we would speak of. Is it a cunningly devised fable, or is it the very truth and power of God, the hope of glory which is set before us? Are we preserved through faith unto salvation—ready to be revealed in the last time? Is our conversation in heaven, and do we expect from thence the Saviour who shall “change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself?” Is it a true saying, that we are “children of God; and if children, then heirs—heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ?” And if we ask for the nature, for the riches, for the blessing of that inheritance, is the answer given, “now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is?” Are we, brethren, prepared to be like the Lord Jesus Christ? Is his life to be our life, and his condition our

condition, and his blessedness our blessedness, and his glory our glory? And are all the treasures of dominion, and power, and greatness, and glorious majesty, which the Father hath emptied into the bosom of his only begotten and dearly beloved Son, held in store for us by that Son? Has he called us to be his bride, his wife, yea, the loved one of his bosom, and will he share with us all the dominion and all the power, so that we shall live and reign with him for ever? Oh! brethren, talk not of the world's changes, and the vicissitudes of this life; speak not of Joseph who was brought from a dungeon, and chosen and exalted to sit on the throne of Pharaoh to be only second in the land;—speak not of Lazarus, taken from the dogs and dust, to be laid in Abraham's bosom;—speak not of being brought from the dunghill to be set among princes;—these are signs, but nothing more of that far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, which our God has prepared for those that love him.”

Why is it?—how is it? Is there a heart so dead, as would venture to bring its own merits or its own doings, and present them as the cause, the procuring cause, the sufficient cause of an issue such as this?—or is it not plain, abundantly plain, that salvation is of grace; yea, from the first to the last—from laying the foundation to the finishing of the building—in procuring the materials and fitting and fashioning the stones, and placing one on another, and raising up the structure—in adorning and compacting and completing it; and yet, in bringing up the top stone, shall we not now and ever proclaim, “grace, grace unto it?”

Oh! yes, it is a plain thing, as a matter of doctrine, let it be powerful, too, as a matter of practice and a matter of life. Brethren, remember, that each of you are saved by grace, if saved at all; and oh! remember, that if not saved by grace, it were better that you had never heard of the grace of God at all! Think what it must be to make of no effect this great salvation that we speak of! Oh! the Gospel of the salvation of the grace of God!—what a blessed sound it is, and what a blessed privilege it is that you have been permitted to hear it, day by day, and week by week; but, oh! brethren, better never to have heard it, than to have heard it carelessly, and but to forget it! It is surely either “a savour of life unto life, or a savour of death unto death;”—either it is now furnishing you with wings, and clothing you with feathers, whereby you may leave this earth and all its bondage, and soar upward into heaven, there to live and dwell with God in life and glory for ever; or else, it is fastening a mill-stone about your neck, and weighing and sinking you down, down, down into the gulf that knows no bottom. Oh! come not, I beseech you in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, come not short of the grace of God, but rather seek to consider how you may find it. If you have not answered the call of mercy, answer it to day; if you have not drawn near to the embrace of the Saviour, draw near to it now; brethren, now confess your sins, now ask for mercy, now cast yourselves into the waiting arms of the God of your salvation; now arise, and go to your Father, and be reconciled to your God.

And oh! if you have tasted that the Lord is gracious, put your whole confidence in him; believe, that that very truth which is sufficient for you is sufficient for all, sufficient in all cases. Fear not any trial, keep not back from any duty, neglect not any service on account of the weakness of your flesh, or the world, but go on in the strength of the Lord; go on, knowing and confessing your own infirmity, and in your weakness the grace of the Lord may be made perfect. Ask largely, you shall obtain liberally; ask according to the rich promises of your God, according to the riches of mercy, the riches of grace, the riches of glory, the unsearchable riches of Christ, which the Apostle speaks of in this epistle; ask according to the largeness of God’s mind, and he will give you to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Magnify that grace—speak well of it—give it all praise, and all honor due; talk not of your merit; let not man persuade you to look to yourselves, but ever turn your eyes to Him who is alone the author and giver of all good things. Go, as an evidence of the truth of God’s Gospel,—go, holding forth the light of life,—go, inviting sinners to come with you, that you may do them good. And then, brethren, if you pursue this career for yourselves—if you pursue this career for your friends, and your neighbours—if you will seek thus to glorify your Saviour in your own hearts, and in your families, in your own neighbourhood and in your own country, will you not have time and occasion to enlarge the kingdom of this grace?—to send out the glad tidings also even to the ends of the world, that sinners may turn to their Lord and live?



Brethren, I will not detain you with any details of the Society for which I plead. I shall not mention the extent or nature of our labours; I shall not enter into the particulars as to what God has done or is doing; but I will only tell you that six hundred millions of your fellow-creatures are perishing in their sins! they are living in ignorance and darkness and corruption, under the power of Satan, under the dominion of sin; without Christ, without God, without hope in the world. Brethren, your neighbour, yea, your brother, for he has your flesh, and the flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ our brother,—your brother has been waylaid by thieves; they have stripped him, they have wounded him, they have left him half dead, and he is lying in his blood;—brethren, will you pass by, and take no heed of him? or

will you look on him with vain curiosity, and mock him with unmeaning pity, and leave him unhelpt and unearned for? Surely you dare not do it;—Oh! you cannot do it, if you know any thing of the grace of God your Saviour. And if you know nothing of the grace by which man is saved, dear brethren, your case is worse than the heathen. But I would hope better things of you; I am speaking to those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious. I have nothing more to say to you; I would only read one word wherewith your God speaks comfortably, encouragingly, blessedly, to you, “God is able to make all grace abound towards you, that you always, being all-sufficient in all things, may abound to every good work, being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth, through us, thanksgiving unto God.”

## THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY

PSALMS lxxiii. 24. and xlviii. 14.

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“Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.”

“This God is our God, for ever and ever: He will be our guide even unto death.”

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THIS world is, to a sinner, like a trackless desert or a wide extended ocean to a traveller. He needs a guide to conduct him through the ordinary difficulties of the way, and a pilot to steer him in safety through the shoals and quicksands and whirlpools which surround him, no matter to what point of the compass he bends his course. He possesses neither the skill to avert danger, nor the power to overcome opposing difficulties. While he continues in his natural state he may travel on with a light mind, because his fears are unexcited, and his desires gratified. It is possible that he may succeed in a great degree in banishing reflection and in saying “peace, peace,” when God hath spoken no peace. This false security may continue to the last, so that he shall have “no bands in his death.” Such a state, whether viewed with reference to life or death, is awful in the extreme; for it is a state in which there is no true knowledge of God—no scriptural dependence upon the Lord Jesus—no looking up for the divine teaching of the Holy Spirit—no solid support under present trials—no well-grounded hope of a blissful eternity. Dear reader, is this thy state? Is thy heart still like the nether millstone? is thine eye still

blinded by the dazzling glare of a vain and deceitful world—are thy desires earthly, and neither spiritual nor heavenly?—art thou satisfied while hugging the chains of thy bondage, and willing to be accounted the slave of sin and the victim of the delusions and the devices of Satan? Can this be so? At ease in the midst of danger—secure in the midst of enemies—bent upon effecting thy eternal ruin? To you, even to you—although born in sin and shapen in iniquity, although a rebel against God and an enemy to thy own soul—is the word of the great salvation sent; awake then, “awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” Thou needest his counsel, his help, and his example, and all shall be thine, if he be the portion of thy soul. This was the persuasion which bore up David’s head above the deep waters; and it is the same persuasion which has ever since upheld and cheered those who have walked in his steps. A God all mercy—a God who will not resort to justice—a God who will unsay his own declarations—a God who will accept defective and polluted obedience instead of that which is perfect and holy;—that is, in short, a God of his own imagina-

tion is the object of worship to the unregenerate men: but he who is born of the Spirit, loves, adores, and obeys the God of the Bible—the omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent Jehovah. Such a man commits his ways unto the Lord, and takes for the subject of his supplications the “exceeding great and precious promises” which abound in the sacred Scriptures. Reconciled to God by faith in his beloved Son, the only Mediator,—he sees the harmony which subsists among all his attributes, and with the utmost confidence can make the language of David his own, “O God, thou art my God”—“This God is our God for ever and ever!” To him he looks in life, in death, and through eternity: in life for guidance—in death for support, encouragement, and comfort—in eternity for the fulness of bliss and glory. There is an inseparable connection between a life of faith, a triumphant death, and a glorious eternity; for it is written “he giveth grace and glory,” and both “the

gifts and calling of God are without repentance.” Believest thou this? Art thou guided by the counsel of the Lord or by the devices of thine own heart? Is the Lord thy satisfying portion—and dost thou find in Him all that thou canst desire to make thee contented and happy here—and blessed for ever hereafter? Art thou made wise by his counsel, and does thy wisdom appear in the preference which is given to the things of eternity above those of time:—and to the salvation of the soul which never dies, above the gratification of the poor, wretched body, which will soon see corruption, and then return to its native dust? Dost thou know whom thou hast believed? Dost thou repose upon the sure word of God? Dost thou fight against sin as thy greatest enemy, and art thou perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord? May we, and those dear to us, have a right judgment in all things.

P. R.

Kilkenny.

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## GOSPEL PREACHER.

"We preach Christ crucified—

"Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God."—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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REV. H. STOWELL.

REV. W. M'ILWAINE.

PREPARATION FOR ETERNITY.

### A SERMON,

PREACHED IN SAINT THOMAS'S CHURCH, DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 1839,

BY THE REV. HUGH STOWELL, A.M.

Of Manchester.

AMOS, iv. 12.

"Prepare to meet thy God."

THE first question in the catechism of the sister church in Scotland, is a question full of weight and wisdom, it is—"what constitutes the chief end of man?" and the answer to that question is equally so; "to know, to love, to obey, and to enjoy God for ever." There is another question, "what is the chief purpose of life?" and we find the reply to that interrogatory introduced in the solemn proclamation that the prophet of old, in the name of God, when foreshowing approaching judgment and impending death, sounded in the ears of the slumbering and unbelieving Israelite, "The end of life is to prepare to meet our God." This is the end and essence of all education, worthy of the name; this is the one grand interest of man here below; therefore, the words of God by the prophet, are addressed to us—even to us, who are

assembled within this house at the present hour. God must be met; there is preparation to be made to meet him; that preparation ought to be the master-object of our life,—these are the three momentous positions suggested by the words, to the importance of which we desire this day to direct your attention. May HE whose message we bear, accompany his own word, with the power and demonstration of his Spirit to your hearts!

GOD MUST BE MET.—The evidence of that position is as unequivocal as is the light of noon; it is intimated by providence—it is attested by conscience—it is demonstrated by revelation. The providence of God inculcates, and that not indistinctly, the judgment to come. The course and order of the divine dealing with mankind, however there may be

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much in it of perplexity and apparent contradiction, yet, when closely and candidly observed, most evidently leads to the conclusion, that there is a day coming when God will vindicate eternal providence, and justify his ways to man; for God has more or less connected punishment with sin, even in this state of discipline, that man can scarcely transgress and fail to reap the first bitter fruits of his transgression here below. Take but a few illustrations from the sins most prevalent among mankind. Does not the drunkard find his retribution in his drunkenness? Does not the unclean man in his uncleanness? Does not the murderer in the blood of his brother, that steals the vengeance of God in his ears? Does not the envious man, that has a canker at the core of his own peace? Does not the discontented and dissatisfied man, who has a worm at the germ of his happiness? Does not the proud man, who exposes his happiness to the smile or frown of every one around him? Has not God, too often signally interposed to visit the sinner with vengeance, even in this life? Have we never heard of the Sabbath-breaker cut off in the midst of his iniquity? Have we never heard of the liar smitten to the ground with the lie trembling on his tongue? Have we never heard of the blasphemer arrested, and dragged to the bar of his God while the oath was vibrating on his lips? Has God left himself without witnesses in the world? Must not the most profane and bad man, if he attends to the traces of providential government, be forced to learn, that "verily there is a God that judgeth the earth," and that the sin of the sinner shall find him out. And if we turn to the converse of the dealings of Providence, and mark how God makes a difference between the saint and the sinner, the virtuous and the vicious—how, while he has bound up punishment with sin, he has bound up recompense of reward with obedience and with righteousness,—how in meekness there is a sweetness that is its own recompense,—how, in humility there is tranquillity that gives a present reward,—how in patience and contentment there is a sweet and balmy atmosphere surrounding the soul, beyond what all the riches of the world can purchase,—that in purity, and sobriety, and temperance, there is for the body and for the mind a present benefit, that tells that God

has stamped his approval on these things,—and have we never also heard how God has interposed on the part of his people, come to their rescue in time of danger—to their support in time of oppression—to their succour in time of temptation? Have we never heard that he has fed them as he did the prophet, employing even the fowls of the air as his messengers,—and how he has guarded them, that though thousands have fallen at their side, it hath not come nigh them? And if it be objected to all this reasoning, that the wicked oftentimes prosper, and have no bands in their death, and accumulate treasure and leave their wealth to their babes—if it be objected, that the virtuous, too, are often afflicted, tormented, distressed, and seem forsaken by God while they are persecuted by man, that they are oftentimes reduced to the last extremity of want and the bitterest anguish of disease,—if this be objected, we take up the objection, and convert it into a corroboration of the argument;—because if the wicked were always punished here, if every sin met with a present recompense of reward, we might imagine that there was no necessity for an after day of eternal retribution; or, if the sinner never met with any measure of punishment—if sin were the source of happiness, as it is of wretchedness,—if it were visited with the signs of the divine approval instead of signs of the divine displeasure, we might argue that there was no God, or that God took no interest in the affairs of men—that he did not sit on the eternal throne, or wield the universal sceptre. But since we find punishment oftentimes inflicted to testify that, "there is a God that judgeth the earth," and yet, on the other hand, we find sin unpunished, and villany triumph—does it not follow, that there must be an after day of reckoning, when God will render to every transgressor the full measure of retribution that he has earned. And so, in like manner, if God never appeared on behalf of his people, then we might imagine, that God had no regard to righteousness and approved not virtue, and sent not his favor on them that practised it; or if the virtuous had their full meed of happiness and their full measure of reward here, we might infer that there was no room or reason for further recompense of reward: but, inasmuch as God often stands forth in

their behalf, to show he regards and loves them, and yet allows them to be oppressed and to suffer, to show that this is not their rest or the scene of their reward, but the scene of their conflict, and the theatre of their discipline, it follows that there must be a future day when God will render to every man according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

And that which Providence thus intimates, the conscience of every man gives its response to, and clearly attests;—there is a judge set up in every man—there is a judge on that tribunal, whose voice, so far as passion and unbelief will allow men to listen to it, gives him no doubt, an anticipation of what will be the decision of the great day of account. Why is it that bad men, even in darkness, tremble often as they perpetrate their deeds of wickedness? why is it, that they often fly when no man pursues, startle at the rustling of a leaf, and are afraid of their own shadow? How is it, that wherever they travel, however they amuse themselves in profligacy or sensuality, there are oftentimes visitations of horror that not unfrequently lead them to rush on suicide, in the mad hope of getting rid of the reflection that there is this secret witness in man, whose voice they may for a season silence, but whose remembrance he cannot stifle,—were it not that there is a law to which that witness appeals, and a tribunal to which that witness points: and so, if the righteous in Christ feel comfort and confidence while their consciences witness that they are doing the will of God—if they feel a sweet satisfaction from accomplishing that which is agreeable to the divine will—if conscience, in the midst of sorrow and suffering and persecution, still leads them forward in anticipation to some future bright scene, where every tear shall be wiped away from the sorrowing eye,—surely here conscience is pointing to the day of recompense of reward, and the man that will listen to the secret monitor, cannot help quailing and trembling at the thought, *I must meet my God*,—the vengeance of man I may escape—the return of my transgression I may avoid—but there will come a day when I cannot escape God's all-seeing eye, or withstand his omnipotent arm; I must appear before the judgment seat of both the quick and the dead.

But, brethren, in a truth of such vital moment and fundamental importance, we

are not left to the indistinct intimations of Providence, or to the still small whisper of conscience; for we have the more sure evidence of revelation, that brings life and immortality to light, draws aside the curtain that hides the invisible world from man, and unfolds to us hell in all its horrors, heaven in all its glory, and judgment in all its dread solemnities.—

Even “Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophecied of these, saying—behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” The patriarch Job, in the anguish of distress, said, “I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet, in my flesh, shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another;” and the wise man winds up his lessons of wisdom by saying, “God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil;” and the psalmist, anticipating the glorious but awful event, said, “let the floods clap their hands, and let the hills be joyful together before the Lord, for he cometh to judge the earth; with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.” And, in the New Testament, we have th's great truth brought before us with striking prominence: Jesus said, “the day is coming when all who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man, and shall come forth, some to the resurrection of life, and some to shame and everlasting reproach;” and again he said, “when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them, one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats, and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on the left. Then shall the king say unto them on the right hand, come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for

the devil and his angels. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." And St. Paul in likewise testifies, "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, to give an account of the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or bad." Need we multiply testimonies?—the whole Scripture points forward to that great day, for which all other days were made. The nature of God, as unfolded in his own revelation, asserts and demonstrates the judgment. Is he holy?—he must hate sin; is he just?—he must punish sin and reward righteousness. Is he omniscient?—he must know sin, and none can escape. Is he omnipotent?—he can arrest the sinner, and none can withstand him. Is he immutable?—his threatnings and promises shall stand, "heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one jot or one tittle of the law shall pass away." Men and brethren, behold how clear and irrefragible the testimonies are, from Providence, from conscience, and from Scripture, that "God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness."

If then God must be met—

II. THERE IS A PREPARATION FOR MAN TO MEET HIS GOD. The simple announcement of such a position ought to be amply sufficient to commend it to the reason and conscience of every man, that hath an ear to hear and a heart to understand. If we were assured at this moment, that at no distant but uncertain day, we must leave the land of our nativity, and set forth for some far distant shore, and there pass the remainder of our days—what an immediate effect it would have on our feelings, pursuits, and engagements! We should feel loose from our present place of residence, our hopes and our expectations would be transferred to the future place of our habitation, we should endeavour to ascertain its character and circumstances, and provide for its necessities, and to get all our affairs and concerns in such a position of arrangement, that whenever the summons came, we might be prepared to set forward. This would become the absorbing object of our minds. Or were we arraigned as being under the guilt, and threatened with the sentence of the laws of our land—were we immured in a dungeon, and awaiting the dread decisive day of our trial, what an

immense effect would such a circumstance have on our minds? The future trial, how best to prepare for it, would absorb our thoughts by day, and tinge our dreams by night—and to secure the best counsel, to get all our evidence in full arrangement, and to seek all the influence we could command in order that the issue of the dread day might be in our favor—this would be the one engrossing subject of our thoughts. And, men and brethren, we are soon to set forward on a voyage, and we know not how soon—not to another land, but to another world—not to spend a few fleeting years, but to spend an eternity! We are awaiting a trial, a trial where the issue will not be death or life, but heaven or hell—the death that ever dying never dies, or the life that must endure while the God who gives it lives. We are within a step of that judgment seat, there is but the breath in our nostrils between us and the bar of Christ! Oh then, where is our consistency, where is our anxious inquiry for that land very far off? Where is our anxiety to learn the language of heaven, and breathe the spirit of heaven, and to get the furniture and adorning that will qualify us for the presence-chamber of the King of kings? Where too, if we are going to that awful trial, where is our anxiety to see, that our agents be in readiness, and our evidence clear, our acquittal certain, and the issue of the great day in our eternal favor? Oh, would to God, that men were alive as they ought to be, to that critical position they occupy in this brief and uncertain state.

Brethren, there is a preparation to be made to meet our God, we are unprepared to meet him. If we came into the world as Adam came, all spotless within, as all was fair and lovely without; if we came into the world without guilt on the conscience, and without corruption in the heart; if we instinctively knew and loved, and delighted in our Father in heaven; if his will was as much our polar star, as the flesh and the world are now our guide and delight;—if we as naturally did what was right, as we naturally do what is wrong, then every hour we lived would be an hour of perfect readiness; whenever our Master came at midnight, or at cock crowing, or in the morning, we should be ready to welcome his voice, and rejoice in his presence;



there would be no natural terror, leading us to seek concealment, as fallen Adam was led to hide himself among the trees of the garden. But is it so? Let revelation, let the sacred Scripture say, is God naturally known, and taught, and loved? Is he the fountain of our joy and the centre of our delight? Do we indeed feel no apprehension in the prospect of meeting him, no dread of death, no dark misgivings of what is to follow? Is there not in the savage mind a sense of guilt and ruin? Is there not an endeavour at expiation, a self-inflicted course of torture and sacrifice, in order, if possible, to make peace with God? But we are not left in doubt by the word of God, it tells us, that one man's sin brought death into the world, and that "death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." It tells us that we are under the law by nature, and the language of the law is, "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them,"—"the soul that sinneth, it shall die." It tells us that this curse and sentence are suspended over every one of us, for that, "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." It teaches us too, that there is in us "a carnal mind that is enmity against God," that we do not take delight in his presence, we are so earthly minded and sensual—that we do not desire fellowship with him, for "how can two walk together unless they are agreed?" And "what fellowship hath light with darkness," or an unrenewed soul with a pure God? And therefore brethren, there is a preparation to be made, for we are not of ourselves prepared. If we go to meet God as we came into the world, and continue in the world, be assured of this, it will be a dread interview, there will be guilt unpardoned, and corruption unsubdued; a holy God and a guilty sinner cannot be at one. But oh thanks be to God for his infinite grace and mercy, in the Gospel of his Son it tells us, that all things are ready, that man may prepare to meet his God; it tells us that we are guilty, but that our iniquities were laid on one mighty to save, who suffered as man, and saved as God, and "made a full, perfect, and sufficient oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world." It tells us that the blood of that precious Lamb cleanseth from all sin; it bids

"the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and to return to the Lord and he will have mercy upon him, and unto our God, for he will abundantly pardon him," through Christ Jesus. It tells us "that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," that "being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." It tells us also, that as there is a redeeming Saviour, so there is a renovating sanctifier, that if the Son died to redeem us, the Spirit descends to renew us, and that the same faith that lifts us to Christ for justification, lifts us to Christ for sanctification; the same two fold stream that bursts from his side, "water and blood," must still be washed in by all that would prepare to meet their God, the blood blotting out the iniquity for ever, and then the water purifying their souls.

And thus brethren, all things are ready. God the Father is ready, that loved us when we were yet enemies, and spared not his own Son, but delivered Him up for us all. God the Son is ready who, having poured out his soul unto death, rose again for our justification, and ascended as our intercessor where his intercession immortalizes atonement, and no poor, weak, sinful mortal can take on him to present the one great sacrifice again and again to God; for the one great High Priest over the house of God presents his own blood for ever. The Spirit of God is ready, the promised Teacher and Comforter, he strives with your consciences, he softens your heart, he entreats you, "why will you die?" The saved are ready with all their invitations and precious promises and gracious precepts. The church of God is ready, into whose pale you are baptized, and to whose ordinances you are invited. The ministers of God are ready, who desire to welcome the returning penitent. The angels are ready to tune their harps and strike their sweetest song over the repentant, the returning sinner.

You see, all things are prepared for us to prepare to meet our God. Let the sinner seek that Saviour, and take him for all his salvation, righteousness, peace, with God; let him receive him as his justification and sanctification, and evidence, that he is in Christ, by bringing forth fruits to the praise and glory of



God ; let him be made a new creature in Christ Jesus, let "old things pass away, and all things become new ;" let the inward, spiritual grace of baptism be evidenced and proved in his heart and life ; let him flee from sin, and rise to righteousness ; let him walk after the Spirit, not after the flesh ; let him no more follow the course of this world but the godly motions of God's blessed Spirit in all things ; let the language of his heart be continually, not what the world will have him to do, or what inclination will have him to do, but what will God have him to do ? let him see, that whether he eat or drink he does all to the glory of God, let him exercise himself to have a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man, let him have his eye turned to the last tribunal, and ask, how will this appear in the judgment day ;— in which book of God's remembrance shall this be written, the black book of wrath, or the bright book of mercy ? let him renounce all confidence in himself, and feel that he is a poor unprofitable servant, yea, in his own view, he is the chief of sinners, and Christ is all in all : let him thus live and thus die, and he is prepared to meet his God. Blessed preparation ! he may say, "O death, where is thy sting, O grave, where is thy victory ? thanks be to God, who giveth me the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord." I have found him on the cross, and I fear not to meet him on the throne ; I know him as my Saviour, and I can go, with awful but confident expectation, to meet him as my judge !

III. Men and brethren, if God must be met, if there must be preparation made to meet him, then, THAT PREPARATION OUGHT TO BE THE MASTER OBJECT OF OUR LIVES. Is there a man that can gainsay, that this is our reasonable service, to live each day for life eternal—to live each day for the great decisive day ?

1st. It ought to be the master object of our life, for *it is the very purpose for which our life was given us*. Think you, that God placed us here, that he continued our life in this world, just that we might eat and drink, and indulge our passions, and amuse our fancies, and follow our pleasures, and sport ourselves, and then lie down and die ? Think you that he placed us here for the strife of ambition, the frivolity of wealth, the mad career of licentiousness, the intense

pursuit of gain ? think you, that mortal minds, like ours, were given us, and that such opportunities and advantages as surround us were afforded to us, that we might act the idiot's part, and give to time our eternal regard ? that we should "sow to the wind and reap the whirlwind," and squander the precious moments, big with eternal destiny ? No, brethren, we are placed here to decide how we shall be placed hereafter, to sow the seed which we must reap through eternal ages, that we may choose salvation or damnation, heaven or hell, God or Satan, and our choice must be our own and that for ever.

2. It ought to be the master-object of life, for *life is little enough to accomplish that great end*. Ah ! many a thoughtless worldly man puts off and puts off preparation to meet his God,—like the poor foolish traveller that sat at the river side, and thought, it flowed so fast, it would soon run dry, but it flowed on and on, and would while the world lasts ; so many a foolish man thinks, that there will come a future time when the torrent of his passions and enjoyments will run dry, and he shall have leisure to seek his God. Brethren, that leisure hour will never come, and every hour of life spent not to the end of life is an hour lost, that will cost you bitter regret here, or eternal remorse hereafter. A holy and devoted christian, that from twelve years of age had served her Saviour to the best of what poor frail mortality can do by God's strength perfected in weakness, whispered to her husband in life's last struggle, Oh ! the preparation of the longest life is little enough for an hour like this, and there is not a man living but if he has any sense and consciousness in that hour, will feel the same. Men talk about the grace of God being all in all, the blood of Christ being all in all. Most true, and so it is, but not to lead to lasciviousness, not to lead to presumptuous procrastination, not to justify us in thinking, that it is a light and little matter to be saved. No, brethren, to be sure of our hope, to ascertain and authenticate our safety, to have abundant proof that we are in Christ, to have no dark clouds brooding over the dark valley, but the light of life beaming brightly over it, to subdue the world, the flesh and the devil, to "fight the good fight of faith,"

to "lay hold on eternal life," to "run with patience the race set before us," to "wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places," to employ the talents intrusted to us as stewards, to bring forth much fruit, that God may be glorified—it is a stupendous task, and the longest life is not too long for us to accomplish it, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for *it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure.*"

3. It ought, brethren, to be the first grand object of life, *because it must be effected here, or it can never be effected.* Yes, the door will soon be shut, and we may knock, and knock, but the voice of our merciful Master may then in justice be, "I never knew you, depart from me ye workers of iniquity." There will be no mercy seat in hell, no Saviour to shed his blood, no omnipotence to save there, no minister of mercy to proclaim, "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and ye shall be saved," no blessed sanctifier to strive with the conscience, and bring us back to God,—no, but "weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

4. It ought to be the great first work of life, *because it is the happiness, the security, the joy of life.* Many put off their religion as a bitter medicine, that they think will poison the stream of earthly happiness. Oh they should take it as a balm, which takes from pleasure nothing but its alloy, and which takes from the cup of sorrow more than half its bitterness. Let a man be at peace with God, and all things are at peace with him, "all things are his, whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are his, and he is Christ's, and Christ is God;" any thing but thine anger, anything with thy love, this is the language of both reason and wisdom. Will it spoil man's happiness to be prepared to meet his God?—Will it make him gloomy and sad, to feel that all is safe, all is right, all is well? "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose," that is happiness, and all besides is as a gilded similitude of it, and no more to be compared with it, than the crackling of thorns

under a pot, with the steady, calm light of the evening star.

Brethren, if life be given us to prepare to meet our God, if life be short enough for that great work, if that work must be accomplished here or left undone for ever, and if to have it accomplished is the pillow of peace, and the strong hold of unchanging security, then surely, as God is to be met, as there is a preparation required to meet him, that preparation ought to be the one master end and object of our life.

Suffer, then, the word of faithful and affectionate admonition and exhortation. Some have grown up to manhood, some have advanced into maturer life, some are descending the hill, and the signs of age are on their brow; men and brethren, many such have never begun life's business, it is yet to be begun, when shall it begin? To day, while it is called to day, to-morrow is not ours, the breath in our nostrils is all that is between us and the state that never changes, Oh! then, "now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation."

Brethren, if you desire to prepare to meet your God, begin where alone you can begin to good purpose, do not daub the wall with untempered mortar, do not seek to make yourselves better, do not go about to make your peace with God, do not suppose, that striving earnestly to make yourselves worthy of God, you may at last trust in Christ, when you are worthy to trust in him. Oh, *this will never lead to peace, pardon and heaven—GO AS YOU ARE TO THE SAVIOUR* that opens his arms to receive you, cast yourselves at his feet, lay hold of his mercy, cry to him like one of old, "Lord, save me or I perish." Without him you can do nothing, but you may do all things through him strengthening you; your best deeds are sinful and deserve punishment, but washed in the blood of the Lamb, they are well pleasing to God. OH, DO NOT PASS BY THE CROSS IN THE WAY TO HEAVEN, OR YOU NEVER CAN GET TO HEAVEN, but begin the race that is set before you—START FROM THE CROSS to the crown, from a crucified Saviour to a glorified judge—be found in Christ and you will be found complete.

Men and brethren, let not the believer in Christ think that his work is done, he has every day, every hour, the same great work in progress, he has still to be fighting the good fight, to be finishing his course,

keeping the faith, that when his Master comes, he may be found with his loins girt, and his lamp burning, that so an abundant entrance may be ministered to him into the glorious kingdom of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,

Dear younger brethren,—ye who are trained and taught in that little nursery for heaven, whose advocate I appear among you this day,—suffer a stranger in the flesh, but a friend, he trusts, in spirit, to say to you, Behold the end of all education, to prepare you to meet your God; if that is gained, all is gained—if that is lost, all is lost. Dear children, I thank God that your education is not so much for time as for eternity,—or rather for time, by being for eternity. There is no education for time worthy of the name, that does not set eternity before it as its goal. Dear children, if you want to prepare to meet God, it is the book in your hands, the book in your heads—Oh, that I might add, that is in your hearts—that alone can guide you in the work. It is not the word of man—not the word of your ministers, however you may revere and respect them as Christ's ministers to your souls—but it is the word of the living God; the voice is human, but the message is divine.

Dear children, allow me to deliver to you a message from a dear child now in heaven, a Sunday-scholar, once like yourselves. I was sent for to visit that poor girl in a northern part of England. She said, she had a sad wicked father, but she had been taught better things in the Sunday-school. When I entered the cottage, the mother said, go up stairs—you will find a melancholy scene there. It was indeed a wretched scene. In one corner, on some straw, lay the father, groaning in bitter pain: he had his leg amputated above the knee, in consequence of a disease brought on by intemperance. In the opposite corner lay the meek sufferer. I spoke to him of coming judgment and hell; but I found drunkenness had done all its desperate work on him, and he was harder than the nethermost mill-stone. I passed to the little sufferer with somewhat of a trembling heart, thinking that the child of such a parent would be like her father; but she had been taught by her Father in heaven, though neglected by her earthly parent. She was lying in brain fever. I drew near and said, my dear child, I think

you are going to die; death is a solemn thing; are you prepared to die? Never shall I forget how sweetly she opened her eyes, and looking wistfully at me, and upward to her God, she said,

“There is beyond the sky  
A heaven of joy and love,  
And holy children, when they die,  
Go to that world above.”

Do you then, said I, hope to go to that world above?—why do you hope it? She said, Jesus died for me. Who, replied I, told you he died for you? My Bible told me. Her little mind began to falter, owing to the severity of the disease, and I could only pray with her then. Visiting her the day after, I found her quite insensible; but even then the tone of her little mind was clearly indicated in her wanderings, for as I hung over her, she began to toss to and fro, and she muttered, “father, pray—you will be lost—you will be lost;” and I said, does she often mutter in her insensibility?—yes, said the mother, and when she was clear, she said, ‘does father pray?’ and when I said, I fear not, she said, ‘if I should go to heaven and father go to hell, should I ever see him again?’ she then became insensible, and muttered, ‘*never, never!*’ I was unable to see her for two days, and at the close of that time, about midnight, she came to herself, and expressed a wish to see her minister; but the persons around her refused, at that hour, to send for me. She turned to a christian friend who had first gone for me, and said, ‘will you tell the clergyman to tell all Sunday-school scholars to read and love their Bibles; that blessed book has taught me, that when I die, I shall go to Jesus Christ; I am going to him, and I am not afraid to go,—and with that she turned her head back on her pillow, and fell away in sleep, and died as easy as an infant on its mother's breast. My dear young friends, there was a child of twelve years' old prepared to meet her God! Oh! take her message—bind it on your hearts; let the Bible be the book of your counsel, the guide of your youth, the stay of your old age, your life in death, and the charter of your hope for ever.

Christian friends, I would just draw one inference more, and that shall be, what is education? Education is preparing redeemed immortal creatures to meet their God; and any education that does not aim at that high end, is an insult

on man, and an outrage on the truth of God. What! shall we think it enough to teach man how he may get his living—to provide the meat that perisheth—to play his part for a few fleeting years on this gaudy stage, while we believe him an immortal being, big with the destinies of eternity? It were far more wise and merciful to adorn the convict's cell, and let music be provided, and every costly viand be spread before him, while the next day his cell shall open, and his chains must clang, and he must go forth to die a shameful death. No better is our education, if we prepare not those that are prisoners of hope, for the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Will any man say that he is a secular educationist, and he only wishes to educate men for time—let the minister educate them for eternity? We answer in reply, taking you on your own low and groveling ground, educate man for eternity, and then you educate him effectually for time; make him a man of sound principles—make him a man of conscientiousness, fearing God and working righteousness, then he will be a good citizen, then he will be a loyal subject, a kind and honest neighbour, a faithful and affectionate father, a tender and loving brother, he will discharge all the relations and duties of life in an efficient manner. You have no guarantee, no security without religion; it is not the head but the heart that makes the man—it is not the education of the intellect

but moral power, that educates man for happiness and God—it is not intellectual but moral—it is not in the head, but in heart—and God and the devil are separate not so much by difference of intellect, as by difference of disposition—the one unmingled malignity, the other unmingled love;—the one radiant with the image of God, the other black with the jet of sin; and therefore, brethren, there is nothing to be more deeply deprecated and deplored in this day of modern innovation, than the attempt to separate secular education and religious. You may be assured of this, that such education, however it may whet the intellect, will only increase the mischievous power and tendency of the heart in the mind of a child; and for your own land—the land of so much strife and conflict—the land of so much dark atrocity, but of so much that is bright and fair in morals and virtue too—the grand panacea for all its evils would be an efficient universal system of scriptural, religious instruction; this alone would still the tempest, throw oil on the troubled waters, and knit man to his fellow-man, and all to God.

Finally, men and brethren, may God seal the text on all our hearts and minds; may he cause it to sink deep into our understandings and our affections, may he proclaim to us, when we awake up in the morning, when we go forth in the day time, when we lie down at night—in prosperity, in temptation, in sorrow, and in joy, “prepare to meet thy God!”



THE CLAIMS OF THE LOST SHEEP OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL, ON CHRISTIAN  
BENEVOLENCE AND CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY.

## A SERMON

FREACHED IN THE FREE CHURCH, GREAT CHARLES-ST. DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY EVENING, APRIL 7, 1839,

ON BEHALF OF THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE JEWS,

BY THE REV. WILLIAM MILWAINE, A. B.

INCUMBENT OF ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, BELFAST,

JOHN XV. 12.

This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you.

It may readily appear, even upon a slight examination of the subject, that although the Old Testament dispensation and the New are parts of the one whole, and so in their great design harmonize together, there are, notwithstanding, many points of difference, amounting even to contrast, between them. This observation is by all admitted as applying to the *ceremonial* part of the law of Moses. The worship under the elder dispensation was one of type and shadow, encumbered with legal ordinances and sacrificial rites, so numerous as to be in many parts obscure even to us, who have the light of the New Testament to guide us in the understanding of them. But while this truth is here admitted, it may not appear so evidently applicable to another great division of the Mosaic law, namely, the *moral*; yet it is, perhaps, equally true here also. The decalogue, it is admitted, is now, as ever, of vast importance to the believer as his rule of life; but, even thus, its place is more than supplied under this our better covenant, by the binding efficacy of one great commandment, namely, that con-

tained in the text, the law of love: it is true, that its influence was felt by every real worshipper of God under the Mosaic dispensation, as well as ours; but it was reserved for the great Teacher of all real morality, to give its full force to this precept, and this he does in such announcements, as that under consideration. Thus, as the spiritual worshipper under the Gospel covenant, is privileged to draw nigh to God by that new and living way, which Jesus has opened to the mercysit, unimpeded by the cumbersome and typical ritual of the elder covenant; so is it his great privilege to realize the fact, that the whole of God's moral law is summoned up in this one command of love. As it is in the natural world, so in the spiritual: one great and comprehensive law governs all the external nature; it is the simple principle of universal gravitation, which binds to its sphere, and regulates in its mysterious movement, the most stupendous planet, as well as the merest atom; so also is it the simple and glorious principle of love, which regulates the obedience and spiritual existence,

both of the highest angelic intelligence in the heaven of heavens, as well as of the humblest saints in the church militant here on earth.

The passage before us is of great importance, inasmuch as it contains a clear statement of this the Redeemer's great moral law: "This," he says, "is *my* commandment"—or, as it is expressed in nearly the same form in another passage, (ch. xiii. 34,) "a *new* commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; *as I have loved you*, that ye also love one another." From both these texts we may perceive, that while the new law of the believer extends to both the tables of Moses' law, it has, in the connexion of the text, a special reference to the second, as summing up in itself all that we have need to know concerning the great duty of Christian benevolence. I would desire on the present occasion, with the Lord's blessing, to consider it in two points of view, chiefly, first, as containing the *principle*, or *motion* of Christian benevolence; and, secondly, *the manner of its acting*.

1. We have then in the first instance, THE TRUE PRINCIPLE, OR MOTION FOR CHRISTIAN LOVE; and this is simply the command of Christ—"This is *my* commandment, that ye love one another." Do we wish for a still more plain enunciation of this great Christian duty, the same apostle will furnish it (1 John iv. 9, 10, 11)? "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." Thus, and thus only may this "new commandment" be learned. Then alone shall we feel its force and obey its precepts, when it has been revealed to the soul and written on the heart—softened by divine grace—by the same—the Holy Spirit's influence. When we have been led to Calvary, and there

behold the manifestation of divine love, exhibited on the cross of Him who is our Master, our Lord, and Saviour, thus dying for us—then, and not till then, shall our renewed hearts beat with love to Him, who has "*so* loved us." Then is this new precept realized, and we shall love not Him alone, but those also whom He commands us to love for His sake. How vast the difference between the new law thus enforced, and that which was given from Sinai: no awful denunciations, no thunderings are heard, no lightnings beheld, only 'the voice of love and mercy,' which commands and constrains us to love in return for all the love bestowed on us 'miserable sinners, who lay in darkness and the shadow of death.' Beloved friends, there is however one denunciation even here—and oh! may the Lord avert it from all who listen to the Gospel proclamation, for it is a dreadful one—it is this, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema." May God, I repeat it, deliver all who hear from slighting love such as His!

But our text not only supplies, as I have stated it, the motive for our renewed obedience, it further teaches us—

2. THE MANNER IN WHICH IT WILL EXHIBIT ITSELF: this occurs in the remaining words—"as I have loved you." This expression, both here and in the passage above quoted, is emphatic; in it our blessed Lord shows us the manner of our renewed obedience, by proposing himself as our example. The same look at the cross of our dying Redeemer, which subdues the believing soul into love for Him who has thus loved us, presents us also in the monument of his bleeding love toward us, with an object of our imitation ever after.

In beholding the love of Jesus as our glorious exemplar, so far as frail, though renewed, human nature may approach what is infinite, there are many features which must strike our devout attention; I shall on

the present occasion however, select but two of these.

1st. I may observe, that the love of the Redeemer for us is a *distinguishing affection*: "as I have loved you" He says;—loved *you* in preference to many, many others. A little reflection bestowed on the subject will show us the force of this remark. To extend our view beyond even our own nature, of which we who are led to believe in Jesus, are thereby shown to be the objects of His distinguishing grace. We can conceive of His love being exhibited in other ways beside that whereby we have become the objects of it. When about to erect a monument on which should be inscribed an everlasting record of infinite love, why it may be asked, was man selected? Not to speak of fallen angels, our partners in misery whom Jesus passed by when He "took upon Him the seed of Abraham." We can conceive of His grace resting on such angelic creatures as had never sinned: the overflowings of everlasting love might have descended upon these; while by raising them in the scale of being, and exalting them to some height of privilege never aspired to, or conceived of even by themselves. He had given an exhibition of love worthy of God himself, and which might be termed infinite: but no; it was "for us men and for our salvation," that Jesus thus manifested love passing all knowledge, and in so doing He has marked the discerning character of His affection toward us.

In holding out to your adoring contemplation and prayerful imitation, brethren, this feature in our Redeemer's love, I may just add one remark, although unable, as we should ever be unwilling to make any such effort to fathom the depths of this eternal mind which are unrevealed to us, yet perhaps, we may without presumption advance one supposition as to the grounds on which such a selection has been made; I mean that your race to be the recipients of God's

infinite love in redemption. It was doubtless *our need* which urged Him who made the choice: we can conceive of no greater case of necessity in existence, than was ours, and therefore we can see one cause at least, why we have been so graciously dealt with. And now to apply this observation to the matter under review, I would say that we have here a characteristic mark of genuine Christian benevolence, as distinguished from that which may be styled *natural*: the one is in imitation of its Great Author in the exercise of His love, of a discriminating kind; the other is exercised indiscriminately—the one will ever select the objects of its choice, and the ground of that selection will be *their need of its assistance*. The other will be bestowed without such a choice, and therefore oftentimes without advantage. The one is as the stream which is guided by the hand of industry and experience toward its desired end, to water the fruitful field, or adorn the garden which has been rescued from the waste. The other is like the wild mountain stream which flows along without guidance and control, to be lost in the wilderness, or expended on the barren and dry land of the desert. Another feature in the Saviour's love is suggested by the text—"as I have loved;" these words are likewise emphatic. The sufferings of Christ have been termed by divines *vicarious*—his love is of a *self-sacrificing* kind, and perhaps it is not beyond the limits of gospel truth to state, that there can be no real imitation of that love, no acceptable conformity to His blessed image, without some measure of this quality. Observe the conduct of our gracious deliverer: how far was he from resting contented with an expression of His commiseration for our lost condition! When from the height of His glory He saw into the depths of that abyss of ruin in which we lay, He not only mourned over our state, but He came to our relief. Even when in the days of his flesh, He wept over the lost Jerusalem,

far from being satisfied with that expression of his sorrow for its approaching calamity, He entered its deserted walls, again to urge the lessons of repentance, again to make the offer of reconciling pardon to its devoted children, and at length to seal this testimony with his blood.

Once more to apply this to the acting of a believer's love, let me ask of you friends, to test your benevolence by this consideration likewise. When the example of Jesus is closely followed, there will be, there must be some sacrifice made. Unlike natural affection, which, alas, in many cases, expend itself when it is sure of meeting a return in kind, and so proves when narrowly examined, but a refined species of selfishness, this truly Christian grace will be bestowed, not only without such a hoped for return, but, as the love of Jesus was in full perfection exhibited, when loss, and sacrifice, and suffering, are the inevitable attendants of its exercise.

And now Christian friends, to apply these observations to the occasion which has brought us together, I have but to remind you of what that occasion is. I have undertaken as you are aware, to plead the cause of the *lost sheep of the House of Israel*, and in so doing, to present you with an occasion for the exercise of Christian benevolence. I might urge their claims on many grounds, but I desire as much as possible to connect my advocacy of them, with the substance of the observations made in the text. I might plead with you on the score of *gratitude*, and demand at your hands a recompense for the blessings of which they have been made the medium of transmission to us. In taking this ground I need only to say, that to them we are indebted for all that is truly valuable—for the inspired records of God's will—"the oracles of God," for the fathers, prophets, apostles, martyrs of old, and *above all for Jesus*, who was and is, after the flesh, of the seed of Abraham.

I might also take the high vantage ground presented by a plea to your sense of *justice*, and demand retribution for the wrongs committed against the seed of Israel by your proposed fathers in the faith—but I forbear. I would rest content on the present occasion by just urging on you one consideration, and that is the *pre-eminence in sorrow and suffering which attaches to the Jew*. And mark you beloved friends, if the real Christian philanthropist seeks for such objects as most need his compassionate regard with that discriminating wisdom which attaches to real Christian benevolence, it will not surely be deemed by any present as a sentiment flowing from overweening attachment to the cause which I am privileged to plead, when I assert, that no other object of Christian sympathy has, on this score at least, so high a demand as lost Israel.

In order to make good the assertion, suffer me briefly to recall your attention first to their *temporal condition*. Time would fail, and the limits of this concluding address prevent my doing anything like justice to this mournful subject. The record of Israel's history is written throughout "with lamentation and mourning, and woe." In order to do justice to it you must make yourselves acquainted with it. There is, however, one consideration which to the heart of a believer in revelation, comes home with peculiar force, when their present abject and ruined state as a nation, is considered. The history of their condition at present, and for many ages, may be found in the prophet Hosea, (ch. 3. 4.) where it is stated that "the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince." The duration of this their state of civil degradation and suffering, may appear from the ages of woe which have already rolled over them; and then is this distressing aggravation annexed—that although it is stated in the subsequent verse, that "afterward shall the children of Israel return and seek



the Lord their God, and David their king ;"—yet, until it please the Lord to issue this His decree for their return to Him, in the person of that Messiah whom they have crucified and slain. No Scriptural expectation can be entertained that they shall be raised to any other condition than that which they at present occupy of forlorn outcasts among the nations : not permitted in the mysterious dispensations of God to mix themselves, and be confounded among the other nations of the earth, nor yet to embody themselves once more into a people in their national capacity, but that thus distinguished only by the wrongs inflicted on them, the history of ancient Israel should impress a dark stain, as often it has been, written in blood, upon the page of universal history. And thus while Egypt, though emphatically styled a vile nation, may look for renovation, and grace may by the permission of God's providence be allowed once more, after the lapse of ages, a name among nations ; and even Rome itself, degenerated and disgraced as she may be, may yet preserve the relics of a mighty empire : no day, until the time of God's purpose alluded to, shall break on the night of Israel's captivity. But her sons are still doomed to the lot of homeless wanderers over the habitable world, and how, it might be added, is this her temporal distress heightened by a reference to her former state of splendour and prosperity. When we reflect, that on the testimony of authentic history, at the time that Rome, the commissioned instrument of God's vengeance against rebellious Israel, arose in the plenitude of her power to accomplish the decree of the Almighty's retribution, so vast was the resistance opposed, that scarce could this, the mightiest empire in the whole world, with all its collected force and arms, accomplish its purpose. How awful now the contrast in the temporal state and prosperity of Israel, when a thousand flee at the rebuke of one ; nor let it be objected to this view of Israel's

temporal calamity, that among ourselves and elsewhere, they enjoy comparative blessings in affluence and protection. Be it ever remembered, that however the influence of the blessed gospel, and the protection of our free constitution may have provided a shelter for the sons of Jacob in this our favoured land ; it is far from being the case elsewhere, even at the time in which we live. Not to speak of the torrents of their blood which have flowed under the influence of papal persecution, even to this hour, in those countries where the apostate religion prevails, the Israelite is degraded not only below the level of all his fellow-subjects, but even below that of the very beast that perisheth ; in illustration of which, I would only allude to one fact—namely, the soul-harrowing circumstance that the name of the Jew is found inscribed among the cattle which are charged for passing along the public roads, and even then, at the gate of the toll-bar is rated below the very swine.

Let us, however, turn for a moment from this view of Israel's temporal destitution, and consider their *spiritual condition* : and here, beloved brethren, is the true point of view in which to learn the claims of Israel on our sympathy. We hear much of the horrors of heathenism, and the half has not been told us ; we shudder at the delusions which possess the followers of the false prophet, but what, I would ask, either in the darkest record of Paganism, or Mahommedanism, can compare with the spiritual wretchedness of Israel. Oh, there is one feature in the case of the Jew which has no parallel in either—it is a fearful one—I almost shudder to allude to it : he *knows* of the name of Jesus, and yet *he hates it*. The victim of Paganism has often but to be told of the blessed gospel, he has only to hear the sweet message of mercy and peace which it reveals, and by the mighty operation of the Spirit he is induced to believe it ; and many a blessed instance is on record, of trophies won to the cross

from the dominions of Satan when such ignorance once reigned—where once there was a desert, but now may be seen to bloom the garden of the Lord: but alas! the more plainly you proclaim the gospel to the Jew, the more you urge on him the claims of Jesus for his faith and worship, the more the enmity of his nature is excited, and he visits with shame and spitting, the message of the Redeemer's love, as his forefathers in unbelief once dealt with the Saviour himself. Yes, I repeat it, brethren, it is this view of their spiritual condition which ought to draw tears of sympathy from the eye of every real Christian, and induce the mightiest efforts of Christian benevolence in their behalf: there is not one of the lost sons of Adam so disposed, not one in such fearful spiritual destitution. Even the Pagan, though ignorant of Jesus, will be attracted and interested by His gospel—the Mahomedan respects Him, and ranks Him next to his own pretended prophet—but the Jew loathes and abhors that holy name by which we are called. May I not then repeat it, that looking thus at the awful necessity of their case, there is not among all the fields of Missionary enterprise, one which so loudly calls for exertions on their behalf, as that which is occupied by those for whom now I plead with you, “the lost sheep of the House of Israel.”

Brethren, if their case thus demands the offices of Christian benevolence in its *discriminating* character, what I would merely add in conclusion, has it drawn forth from you in the expression of that true Christian love which is prepared to exhibit itself in *making sacrifices*, when appealed to for those in such deep need? The demand which is now made upon you is perhaps the least of all others—it is that you would contribute somewhat of your means to the aid of those who thus lie in the pit of temporal and spiritual destitution. Remember, I pray you, the case presented to you for commiseration: to sum up all in one awful word

which best explains it—the curse which their own lips once pronounced on their race—“His blood be on us, and on our children,” lies yet unrepealed upon them: oh rest not brethren until the Lord repeal it, and the Saviour's blood be indeed applied to lost Israel, not to condemn and devote to the divine vengeance, but to pardon and save.

One word, brethren, in conclusion: I have hitherto addressed those who can feel for the claims of Israel upon their Christian sympathy, I can not however forget, that there may be others present. And if the case of God's once favoured, but now unbelieving people, be a calamitous one, it is an awful reflection, that there may be some now within reach of my voice, whose situation is far more deplorable: I cannot expect that those should feel for the wants of Israel, who have never felt their own spiritual necessities, and I am free to confess, that in consenting to advocate the cause of God's ancient people at this time, however feebly, I did so with the earnest and prayerful hope, that a word here spoken might reach, by the efficacy of God's gracious Spirit, some such persons as those here alluded to. If there be any here of this class, I would entreat them, though they have no pity for the sons of Jacob, to have pity on themselves. Oh if the vials of God's vengeance have descended thus on His ancient people, for the rejection of Him who was their Messiah and lawful King, how much more shall be the punishment of those who day after day, and week after week, year after year, listen to the proclamations of the gospel of peace, only to make light of its proffered grace. Dear friends, if I now address any such, again I say, have mercy on yourselves, as you would avoid the anger of a most justly offended God—the judgments of a Saviour twice crucified—even now repent ye and believe the gospel—kiss the Son lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way!

# UNUNIFORMITY OF CHRISTIAN GRACES, NO DISCOURAGEMENT TO THE BELIEVER.

WHENCE is this delicate scent in the rose and violet ? It is not from the root, that smells of nothing ; not from the stalk, that is as scentless as the root ; not from the earth whence it grows, which contributes no more to these flowers, than to the grass that grows by them ; not from the leaf ; not from the bud, before it be disclosed, which yields no more fragrance than the leaf, or stalk, or root ; yet here I now find it. Neither is it here by any miraculous way, but in an ordinary course of nature, for all violets and roses of this kind yield the same redolence : it cannot be, but that it was potentially in that root and stem from which the flowers proceed, and there placed, and thence drawn by that Almighty Power which has given these admirable virtues to several plants, and educes them in their due seasons to these excellent perfections. It is the same hand that works spiritually in his elect. Out of the soil of the renewed heart, watered with the dew of heaven, and warmed with the beams of his Spirit, God can, and in his own season doth, bring forth those sweet odours of grace and holy dispositions, which are most pleasing to himself ; and if those excellencies be so closely lodged in their bosoms, that they do not discover themselves at all times, it should be no more strange to us than that this rose and violet are not to be found but in their

own months : it is enough that the same virtue is still in the root, though the flower be vanished.—*Bishop Hall's Century of Divine Breathings.*

He were very quick sighted that could perceive the growing of the grass, or the moving of the shadow upon the dial ; yet, when those are done, every eye doth easily discern them. It is no otherwise in the progress of grace ; which, how it increaseth in the soul, and by what degrees, we cannot hope to perceive ; but, being grown, we may see it. It is the fault of many Christians, that they depend too much upon sense, and make that the judge of their spiritual estate ; being too much dejected, when they do not sensibly feel the proofs of their proficiency, and the present proceedings of their regeneration : why do they not as well question the growth of their stature, because they do not see every day how much they are thriven ? Surely, it must needs be that spiritual things are less perceptible than bodily : much more, therefore, must we in these wait upon time for necessary conviction ; and well may it suffice us, if, upon an impartial comparing of the present measure of our knowledge, faith, obedience, with the former, we can perceive ourselves any whit sensibly advanced.—*Ibid.*

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# THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

## GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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No. XCIV. SATURDAY, 12TH OCTOBER, 1839.

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REV. HUGH MC. NEILE.

REV. M. S. ALEXANDER.

GOD GLORIFIED IN THE DELIVERANCE OF ISRAEL, AND THE DESTRUCTION  
OF ANTICHRIST.

### A SERMON

PREACHED IN ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, DUBLIN,

ON TUESDAY EVENING, APRIL 9, 1839,

ON BEHALF OF THE “ LONDON SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE JEWS.”

BY THE REV. HUGH M'NEILE, A.M.

(Incumbent of St. Jude's, Liverpool.)

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*Published at the request of the Society.*

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EXODUS IX. 16.

“ And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.”

SELF manifestation is the chief purpose of God. A moment's reflection will show you that it could not be otherwise—“ of Him, and through Him, and by Him, are all things,” and it follows inevitably, that to Him are all things. They all originated from Him, they are all supported by Him, and they all minister to Him—“ thou art worthy O Lord, to receive glory and honor, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

The history of Pharaoh king of Egypt, is written to illustrate this grand feature in the divine Revelation; and connected as it stands with the Exodus of the Israelites, it is fraught with the deepest

interest as well as the most important instruction to every man who reads it. In Exodus i. 6. 7. we read, that “ Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation; and the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly and multiplied, and waxed exceedingly mighty, and the land was filled with them.” Thus we learn, that during Joseph's life, and for a period after his death, so long as his godly influence was felt in its consequences upon the Egyptian court, the Israelites were kindly treated, and under the good providence of their God, increased and multiplied exceedingly. We then read, that “ there arose up a new king over Egypt which



knew not Joseph." This was not the celebrated Pharaoh, but his predecessor. The Pharaoh here mentioned came to the throne previous to the birth of Moses, but in chap. ii. 23. we are informed, that the king of Egypt died while Moses was absent in the land of Midian.—"It came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died," and in chap. iv. 19. the Lord desires Moses in Midian to return into Egypt, for said he, "all the men are dead which sought thy life." This king knew not Joseph, his character had not been influenced by the godly example of that man, and he was altogether worldly; he devised his projects and laid all his plans, and carried forth all his arrangements according to worldly maxims, "he said unto his councillors, behold the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we; come on, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply, and it come to pass when there falleth out any war they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land; therefore, they did set over them task masters to afflict them with their burdens." Here is a specimen of his worldly wisdom, it is what is called 'state policy,' that is, it is conducted with reference to the convenience or supposed convenience of statesmen, and not to the high and immutable principles of justice and honor and truth. Under this man's tyranny the children of Israel groaned in bondage, as we learn from the 13th and 14th verses of this 1st chap.—"And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour, and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field; all their service wherein they made them serve was with rigour." Now it is of importance, that we remark the duration of this bondage on the part of the Israelites; the incidents of a century may be read over in a few minutes, and unless the reader will make the mental effort of transferring himself into the

position of the persons he is reading about, and realizing the duration, as well as the succession of the incidents, he will fail to derive that important benefit from the Scriptures which they were expressly written to convey; for "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."

Mark the period during which the children of Israel endured this excessive hardship, it commenced before Moses was born; it was in consequence of the tyrannical decree of that persecuting monarch that the infant Moses was exposed. Now in chap. ii. 11. 12. 13. 14. we read— "And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand. And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? And he said, who made thee a prince and a judge over us? Intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, surely this thing is known."

By a reference to the account given of all this by Stephen, in the seventh chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, we learn that at the period here referred to, Moses was forty years old:—"When he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian. For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not. And the next day he showed himself unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again,

saying, Sirs, ye are brethren ; why do ye wrong one to another ? But he that did his neighbour wrong thrust him away, saying, who made thee a ruler and a judge over us ? Wilt thou kill me as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday ?" The consequence was his flight from Egypt ; and we read further in this address of Stephen, that Moses was forty years an exile ;—here, then, we have at least eighty years of persecution accounted for—the forty year of Moses' youth—the forty years of his exile. How long this bitter persecution commenced previous to his birth, we cannot exactly determine ; we read of an effort to exterminate the Israelites previous to the decree, under the operation of which Moses was exposed ; so that a persecution was in operation previous to his birth, and it continued until he was eighty years old. We may endeavour, then, to imagine what the children of Israel must have suffered during that period—how bitterly they cried to the Lord their God—how loudly they complained, as far as they dared to complain ; and if any of them in the faith of the promise made to Abraham, ventured to express their hope that the God of their fathers would interfere in their behalf, we can readily imagine the infidel sneer—the cool despicable scorn with which the Egyptians would have treated any such reference to a God, whom they knew not. However, though the Israelites were so long persecuted, they were not forsaken ; though they were cast down, they were not destroyed ; though perplexed, they were not in despair—the time was coming when the faithful God, though he tarry and appear slow, yet will prove that he is not slow as men count slowness, but is true indeed to his word—the time was coming, long delayed, but it was sure—it came at last ; and after Moses had been forty years an exile, the Lord God of his fathers appeared unto him, and called to him from the midst of the bush and said, " I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of

Isaac, and the God of Jacob ; I have surely seen the afflictions of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry, by reason of their task masters, for I know their sorrows." What an interesting view this presents ! he had seen their misery—he had heard their cry—he knew their sorrows—"in all their afflictions he was afflicted"—entering by anticipation into the sympathies of the fore-ordained manhood that he was to take, that he might feel for his brethren. Yet though so entering into their feelings, he forebore to help them for a season, and this is written for our learning. But having assured Moses of this, and having commissioned him to go to the King of Egypt, and to demand the manumission of the people, he apprises him of the reception he would meet with, knowing as he did the character of the King. At the 19th and 20th verses of this chapter we read, " I am sure that the King of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand." And what then ?—" I will stretch out my hand and smite Egypt with all my wonders, which I will do in the midst thereof, and after that he will let you go." Here we learn something of the character of this Pharaoh who was now on the throne ; he was a man who would not yield to entreaty—a man of obstinate, determined character, ignorant of God, and proud in his own self-dependence ; accordingly we find in the opening of the fifth chapter, when Moses went to him and made the demand, " Let my people go," his answer was, " Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go ? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go."

Now, this character of Pharaoh gave occasion for the manifestation of God's power in delivering his people. It would have been an easy thing for God to have removed Pharaoh by the secret exercise of his power—it would have been an easy thing for him to have smitten him with disease, and laid him in his grave, apparently by second causes ; it would

have been an easy thing for him to have delivered the children of Israel, by some secret energy, working through second causes, and if the whole of his design had been to accomplish this object, such a mode of doing it would have answered the purpose; but that was not the whole of his design; part of that design was to glorify his own name, that his name should be known and his power should arrest attention, and therefore he adopted a different method. To have accomplished the removal of the Israelites by secret power, would have been comparatively a speechless procedure, but God determined that his procedure should be eloquent, and his instruments were all now ready. Moses had been for forty years attending sheep, and learning patience in the school which was preparing him to sustain the amazing honor afterwards put upon him. Pharaoh in the indulgence of luxury, self-will and self-dependence, had been imbibing those principles of stubbornness which prepared him also to resist the demand when made upon him: and thus the elements of the storm were each collecting in their respective places, ready for convulsion when God brought them to meet. Moses prepared in meekness to add deeds of power to words of truth; and Pharaoh prepared in obstinacy to afford opportunity to manifest these wonderful powers. The process is put into operation, and it becomes a hardening process—mark the tenor of it—first there is an appeal with a wonderful work wrought in the sight of the king, alarming his fear; then there is a pause allowing this fear to subside. Take one specimen in the viii. chap., when the frogs came on Egypt, from the 8th to the 15th verses, we read—“Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, entreat the Lord, that he may take away the frogs from me, and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may do sacrifice unto the Lord. And Moses said unto Pharaoh, glory over me: when shall I entreat for thee, and

for thy servants, and for thy people, to destroy the frogs from thee and thy houses, that they may remain in the river only? And he said, to-morrow. And he said, be it according to thy word; that thou mayest know that there is none like unto the Lord our God. And the frogs shall depart from thee, and from thy houses, and from thy servants, and from thy people; they shall remain in the river only. And Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh; and Moses cried unto the Lord because of the frogs which he had brought against Pharaoh. And the Lord did according to the word of Moses; and the frogs died out of the houses, out of the villages, and out of the fields. And they gathered them together upon heaps; and the land stank. But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said.”

This is a very awful process—the appeal excites the feeling, and the respite affords time for the feeling to subside: the appeal awakens the conviction, and the respite gives opportunity for the counteraction of the corruptions. Now, every time that man's convictions yield before his corruptions, it becomes more and more difficult again to awaken those convictions; the process is a hardening one, for though the application at man's heart continue in itself what it was, though the invitation from God continue free as at first—though the knocking at the door be as loud and as sincere as ever, yet the door becomes progressively encrusted in its hinges, and that which should have been for its opening, becomes a bar against the possibility of opening it—the heart becomes stupified, callous, unrestrainable—the conscience seared as with a hot iron, and the man makes progress to a reprobate mind to believe a lie, that he may be damned.

Now, my brethren, in such a process, what is it that God does? It is of consequence to observe what it is he does:



the history of Pharaoh illustrates this most interesting subject. Pharaoh was—what I need not now take time to enlarge on, but express briefly—an *unconverted man*—a natural descendant of Adam, dead in trespasses and sins. Concerning such an one you have all heard—most of you, I hope, know that, “except he be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” When I said, I hope you know this, I did not mean in the mere perception of the fact, for so, I suppose, none of you can be ignorant of it; but I meant in the experience of your own affections—your own hearts: and in this sense you are all ignorant, who are not personally born again yourselves—and no man can teach you. This is the point concerning which it is said, “They shall all be taught of God,” every man that hath heard and learned this matter of the Father cometh to Jesus, *and no other*.

He was a man, then, who required to be born again. Except there was this vital change wrought on his soul, he could not be saved. Now, there are three methods in which a sinner may be dealt with:—first, to bring him under the means of grace; and to add, in the means, the grace itself. So, to convert him—so, to grant him this new spiritual birth, and make him a child of the living God by faith in his truth—that is one mode. Another mode is, to leave him without the means of grace altogether in the unreclaimed waste of heathenism. There is yet a third mode, to bring him providentially under the means, and there to leave him without the grace. All that God does to man is good. We desire to extend the means, to circulate the Bible, to send missionaries to propagate the preaching of the Gospel, to multiply means:—we thank God for the increase of the means—to give the means is to do men good; so far as that goes the tendency of it is good—the direct agency in Him that grants it is good; but as good food is turned into mischief by the disease of him who eats it, so this good dealing of God to the

unconverted man becomes a hardening process, through the unsubdued corruptions of that man’s heart. An instance or two will set it very plainly before your minds. When our Lord Jesus was on earth, he wrought wonderful works in the cities of Gallilee; Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum, were blessed with means beyond all that ever had been given before, but they were not blessed with converting grace; what was the consequence? “Woe unto thee Chorazin! woe unto thee Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven”—how? Why in the plenitude of the means bestowed on it—“shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.”

Now, was it an unrighteous thing in God to give means to Chorazin, and Bethsaida, and Capernaum, and not to give grace? Nay, is he a debtor to give any man grace?—“If it be of debt it is no more of grace, otherwise grace is no more grace.” He is not a debtor; what He did was good—He gave the means, but through the corruption of the unsubdued heart of man, the means only hardened, because they awakened the feelings, and then the feelings subsided again. Means rouse convictions, but in-dwelling corruption clamouring afresh, gains the ascendancy, and the last state of that man is worse than the first. The means harden, yet it is good to give the means. God hardened Pharaoh’s heart by sending Moses to him to awaken his feelings, to raise his convictions; but God was not a debtor to him to give him



grace; he gave him opportunities—that was good; but through the wickedness of man the opportunities were turned into a hardening process; and so it is said he hardened his own heart; and so it is said, God hardened his heart.

Look at another instance: there was a little company of men, who had means afforded them beyond all that we can readily conceive—I mean the little company of twelve, who went out and in with their dear and blessed Lord, who beheld his works and listened to his words, partook of his sympathies, sat at his table, and dipped in the dish with him—these men saw the wonders he did, and now, as their privileges were high even to heaven, one of them who had not grace added thereto, became a devil—“Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil”—hardened to hell by means calculated to lift him to heaven, because the grace was not with the means. Oh! solemn, solemn consideration for you all! The law of God was ordained to life; but the Apostle says, that he found the law which was “ordained to life, to be unto death,” because that “sin in him, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in him all manner of concupiscence, for without the law sin was dead; when the commandment came sin revived; yet the law was good, “holy, just, and good,” and “ordained to life;” though through the medium of the material it met with, when it struck on fallen man, it turned into death; just as the lancet, meeting with a clear vein and a healthy circulation, encounters sound and pure blood; but the same lancet equally clean, equally pure in itself, a polished metal as before, coming upon an abscess, instead of finding pure blood, finds nothing but a gush of corruption. So is God’s commandment, falling upon the heart of a holy angel, and commanding “love,” it is re-echoed from that creature in a healthy circulation, and the echo is “*loved!*” but falling upon man and saying, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God,”

it raises in him the consciousness of the idols on which his heart is set, and makes him to feel that he hates the God who commands him to love him.

Here is the process then that was set in operation. See you not how the opposition occasioned by the hardening of Pharaoh, gave occasion for the manifestation of God’s power? Now see the manifestation of God’s purpose—“And in very deed, for this cause have I raised thee up, (brought thee to the throne,) for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.” While that man was in private life, his character, although ruinous to himself, was comparatively harmless to others—but he was a fitting instrument for elevation in the rank of society, that he might stand prominent against the command of God, and so give occasion to manifest the power of God on the earth. That this was the object in view, will be made quite clear by referring to the xiv. chapter. The Israelites had gone toward the wilderness from Rameses to the Red Sea, and they had a clearer and shorter way toward the place where they were going; but the Lord desired them to turn, and brought them into a defile between the sea and the mountain. “And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, speak unto the children of Israel, *that they turn* and encamp before Pihahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baalzephon: before it shall ye encamp by the sea.” The reason is assigned in the next verses—“For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, they are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in. And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, that he shall follow after them, and I will be honored upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord; and they did so.”

There was the object—to show his power, and that his name might be known. He did not make Pharaoh wicked, Adam made him wicked—he was born wicked. I say again, what God did for him in

sending Moses, in its direct tendency, was to convince him of Jehovah's power, and do him good, but He did not add grace to it, and therefore although good in itself, instead of doing good, it hardened Pharaoh's heart, and so it gave opportunity for this splendid exhibition of God's power in the deliverance of His people, in the passage through the Red Sea, and laid the basis of the song of Moses which was then sung—"Sing unto the Lord for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea!"

Now the process described by the apostle concerning the great Antichrist, under whose tyranny the Christian church and the surviving Jewish nation still groan, and must groan for a time still—I say the *surviving* Jewish nation, for although the Jewish people was a type of the Christian church, it has not disappeared like other types, it has been preserved all through the Christian period, it has been kept separate from all the nations; a standing manifest proof that something more was intended than a type; for if it had only been a type, where would have been the object of maintaining it in a manifest separation after the anti-type had come? But it was not only to be a type in its former history, but to be itself the subject of another history—and so, not only the Christian church, but the dispersed Jewish nation, are now enduring persecution of various descriptions, more or less rigorous in different climes and countries, under different laws, and different circumstances—sometimes active, sometimes slack, but always inveterate—opposition and persecution from the great apostacy of the last times, against the church and people of God.

The process is thus detailed by the apostle, 2. Thes. ii. after describing the mystery of iniquity, he gives this characteristic in this history—"his coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received

not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." "In very deed, for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth."

See Antichrist raised up that God may show His power in him, and that the name of God may be declared throughout all the earth. The church and Jewish people seem to be forgotten, but they are not. "I have seen, I have seen," saith the Lord, "the affliction of my people," I was a little angry with them, a little displeased, and ye have helped forward the affliction. He exposes both his Jewish people, and his Christian church, to trials for their discipline; but the wicked ones who grind them down under that discipline, have malicious pleasure in adding to the affliction. God knows it, he will not forget it—he sees it all, he hears the cry of his people; for he says, "I know their sorrows"—"We have one who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities"—one, that while numbers of his people were persecuted by Saul, cried "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

He is the same now, he has been the same ever since. He stands aloof and allows this persecution to go on—he hath tried the nations what they would do to His people with whom He is a little displeased, and they have, oh how fearfully! helped on the affliction, persecuted the Jews to death, robbed them, imprisoned them. The great apostacy has put them by scores into her Inquisition, and tortured them to death—the *blood of Judah is engraved on her forehead*, and so of the saints. The Christian believers are also tried in this manner;—and now you see the object I had in view in asking you to consider the period during which Israel was tried in Egypt—eighty years.

This sounds a short time—in history it sounds but little; but how many of the Lord's people have fallen asleep during eighty years? How many have groaned and groaned, and so died in their groaning?—the whole generation of the Jews. Now, see how the Scripture preaches *patience*. I would say to the dispersed of Judah, in this respect, *patience*—and to the Christian believer, *patience*. It would be an easy thing for Him to relieve you by the exercise of his power—it would be an easy thing for Him to deprive your enemies of power, by secret causes—it would be an easy thing for Him to remove the tyranny of the great mystic Babylon, by apparently mild and gentle means, gradually to subdue her, under the preaching of the word, for instance, and convert the nations by a sweet, and easy, and genial process of Gospel preaching; this might be—and if this were all—if all his object were to deliver his church, and to bring a people out from the world, doubtless, it might so be done; but that is not all his object; He will glorify his power—"What, if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power to be known, endured for a while, with much long suffering, the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." "In very deed, for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." For this was the process to show his power, and make all see and know, that it is He that does it; He will not leave a vestige of infidelity in the universe, nor an opportunity for a hardened or obdurate spirit, to whisper for an instant that God is not sovereign: the earth shall rejoice under it—heaven shall adore Him, and hell shall be convinced of it with terror, that God is over all, almighty for ever.

He will show then his power; and in order to do so, in the grand climax of his dealings, He is preparing elements of discord. The great Antichrist is gathering to a head—the great infidel beast—

the great superstitious harlot, are joining their powers together—growing in impudence and stubbornness, growing into the language of Pharaoh, "Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go"—neither will I mind his Son, or his Bible:—and what shall the end be? My dear brethren, in the end the song of Moses shall be sung, together with the song of the Lamb—see them combined in Rev. xv.—a remarkable fact, why is this?—the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb! The song of Moses was, "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him. The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name. Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea. The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone. Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble. And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea. The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them. Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them; they sank as lead in the mighty waters. Who is like unto thee O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed



them. Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation. The people shall hear, and be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestine. Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling, shall take hold upon them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away. Fear and dread shall fall upon them: by the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till thy people pass over O Lord, till the people pass over, which thou hast purchased. Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in; in the sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever. For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots, and with his horsemen into the sea, and the Lord brought again the waters of the sea upon them: but the children of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea." And the chorus of the congregation was, "sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea!" And the song of the Lamb is, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power, unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand," and cast down great Babylon, down, down, down—Babylon is fallen! Holy, holy, holy—and again they said, Alleluia!

The Lord hath manifested his glory—the Lord's name is great over all the earth—and so shall the two songs go together. And why peculiarly is the song of Moses introduced again? Because at the same time that the Christian Church shall be delivered from mystic

Babylon, the Jewish nation shall also be delivered from her captivity. And the Lord will put forth his hand again to gather them from Assyria and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

"And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim. But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west; they shall spoil them of the east together: they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them. And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dryshod. And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt. And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord, Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. And in that day shall ye say, praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion; for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee."



Thus, my dear brethren, all things are getting ready for the end: the time of captivity is still in being, and the Scripture preaches patience, "wait on the Lord, and he will strengthen your heart." Oh! "come my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation be over past," for the Lord is coming out of his place, to punish the wicked; it shall be "the time of Jacob's trouble—none like it, but he shall be saved out of it; for it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of Hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck"—his yoke, the great Babylon, the great Antichrist—"and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him; but they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king whom I will raise up unto them." He had sworn an oath that of the fruit of David's loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up one to sit on his throne, that is Christ;—"Therefore, fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord: neither be dismayed, O Israel; for lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid." Another description of that grand winding up, as regards Jacob, is given in Isaiah, xlix. 25, 26. "Thus saith the Lord, even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered; for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children. And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh, and they shall be drunken with their own blood as with sweet wine; and all flesh shall know that I, the Lord, am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty one of Jacob." He will do it so, that all must know it—it shall not be done in a corner. This is the consummation we are looking for; most terrible

to all who are found in opposition to God in that day—and oh! how precious the deliverance from captivity to all who know and love him—who have taken refuge in that bosom, touched with the feeling of our infirmity—who have clothed themselves by faith in that precious Saviour, who is "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

My brethren, flee to him, he is the only refuge. When the hand of the Almighty is lifted up to strike with terror, that all the earth may know his power, where is your safety? Will you fly to the ends of the earth?—there his hand will hold thee. Will you dive to the depths of the sea?—will you call upon the rocks and mountains to fall upon you and cover you?—in vain, in vain!—where is there refuge, where is there safety from the uplifted arm of the Judge? Only within that arm, only in his bosom, there is safety. He that dwelleth in Jesus Christ by faith dwelleth in God; he is safe, and there is nothing else safe in the universe: nothing else but God's Son, the Son of his bosom, the Son of his love, can give you safety. If you are not members of Christ, you must be dashed into eternal ruin. In Jesus' bosom there is peace, and none can make you afraid,—“trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting salvation.” Look at this view—how it enlarges our hope, places every thing in its proper nitch, exhibits to us the character of worldly tyrants, shows us where they are, where they stand in God's dealings; and when their power waxes strong, their political opposition is apparently triumphant, and the Church of the living God seems scattered and peeled like the Jewish people, and desponding of all assistance,—yet have patience. When her treatment is at the worst—when they talk to her as the Egyptians did to the Israelites, “Ye are idle, ye are idle, make brick without straw”—wait on the Lord—have patience

—he will try you for your good. He is hardening Pharaoh and proving Israel, his first-born : hardening Antichrist and proving his dear children in Christ Jesus. Yet a little while, and he will come forth from his place, and cause both songs, for which the music is getting ready, to be sung for ever, to the praise and glory of his holy name.

“ Great and marvellous are thy works Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou king of saints! Who

shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy : for all nations shall come and worship before thee ; for thy judgments are made *manifest*.” And in very deed, for this cause was Antichrist exalted, that thy power might be *shown*, and that thy name might be declared throughout all the earth. Blessing and honor, and glory and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever! Amen.

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Three Sermons on the 11th Article of the Church of England, (justification by faith only,) by the REV. C. M. FLEURY, A.M. will appear in an early number.

THE UNCHANGEABLENESS OF GOD, MANIFESTED IN THE PRESERVATION  
OF ISRAEL.

## A SERMON,

PREACHED AT SANDFORD CHURCH, DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY, APRIL 7, 1839,

ON BEHALF OF THE LONDON SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIANITY  
AMONGST THE JEWS.

BY THE REV. M. S. ALEXANDER,

PROFESSOR OF HEBREW AND RABBINICAL LITERATURE IN KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON, AND  
MISSIONARY OF THE LONDON SOCIETY, FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIANITY AMONGST THE JEWS.

MALACHI, iii. 6.

"I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

I feel sure, my beloved brethren, that in addressing you this morning, I am privileged to address a congregation, some of whom,—I trust many of whom, yea I will hope all of whom,—have often derived much comfort, consolation and encouragement from the words just read; the unchangeableness of God being one of the firmest rocks on which the Christian builds his hopes both for time and for eternity. But allow me, in the outset of my discourse, to ask, did you ever consider these words in reference to that people respecting whom they were primarily and more immediately uttered? The Christian church has been verily guilty in this matter, in that she has appropriated to herself many, if not all, the promises of God made to His people Israel. This is an error which, like every other, is founded upon a truth: mention is made in the New Testament of the Israel of God; they who possess the faith of Abraham, are said by our blessed Lord and by His apostles, to be the seed of Abraham: here has arisen this error, that wherever a promise is made to Abraham's posterity, it has been thus applied to the church of Christ. We would by no means wish to deprive the Christian of the comfort, the consolation and the encouragement, which he may

variously derive from the promises secondarily; but they ought certainly not to be thus applied to the almost entire exclusion of that people, "whose," as the apostle emphatically tells us, "whose are the promises," Rom. ix. 4. Allow me then, in humble dependance upon the teaching of God's Holy Spirit, to direct your serious attention to the words of our text, in which we have

I. A FACT STATED—"the sons of Jacob are not consumed."

II, THE REASONS ASSIGNED—"I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

I. That the sons of Jacob, the literal descendants of that illustrious Patriarch, were not consumed, was declared to be a marvellous fact, at the time when Malachi prophesied, which was no less than three hundred and ninety-seven years before the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and then already it was considered an astonishing circumstance, that the sons of Jacob were existing, and had not been consumed—and brethren, well it might, for often previous to that period were the sons of Jacob brought into circumstances, when, according to all human appearance, there seemed no possibility of their escaping total destruction. I would just remind you, Christian

brethren, of the time when they went into Egypt, few in number, where they were made to labour hard, and in consequence of their increase, which excited the envy and the alarm of the Egyptians, every possible and cruel means were devised to root them out of the land altogether. But I ask, were the sons of Jacob there consumed? No! they cried unto the Lord in their affliction, and the Lord heard their cry, and sent them a deliverer. Moses was commissioned to go in the name of the King of kings and Lord of lords, and request Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go; and though it was not till after most awful judgments came upon Pharaoh and his people, yet in the Lord's own time, the sons of Jacob went out of their enemies' land triumphantly. But no sooner was this the case, than they found themselves before the Red Sea. Before them was the impassable deep, behind them the enemy pursuing them with all possible fury, surrounded by great and tremendous mountains, and, according to human appearance, there seemed no possibility of the few sons of Jacob, their escaping total destruction. But brethren, were the sons of Jacob there consumed? No! He who is the Lord of all power and might, could make a way for His people through the sea, and thus He gave the command, the sea divided, and His people passed through dryshod, whilst they saw their enemies perish on the shore of this sea. They then were led on through the wilderness, on their way to the land of promise, during which period they often rebelled against the Lord, and manifested the fallen state of human nature, that notwithstanding the many and the signal mercies which they had so often experienced at the hand of their God, they still were unmindful of them; and on one occasion especially, when they murmured against the Lord, and against Moses, it pleased the Lord to send among them fiery serpents: and we read in the book of Numbers, that thousands of the children of Israel died daily, and it seemed as if the wrath of God had come down upon them to the very uttermost, so as to destroy them! But again we ask, were the sons of Jacob then consumed? No! they were brought to repentance. The very end which God had in view, in visiting them with His judgments, the very end which God ever hath in view in visiting any of His people with His judgments, is to bring

them to repentance, and thus we find they went to Moses and said, "We have sinned against the Lord, and against thee, entreat for us, that this evil might be removed from us." Moses entreated the Lord, the Lord was entreated of, and He granted them a remedy. A brazen serpent was commanded to be made and placed upon a high pole, which every Christian knows, was typical of Him, who himself explains it in St. John, iii. 14. 15. where he says, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." This remedy was made, and we read Numbers, xxi. 9. "that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass he lived." They were finally brought to the land of promise, out of which seven nations greater and mightier than they, were driven. They had possession of their land, they enjoyed every blessing which a nation is capable of enjoying—they had their own country, their own city, their temple, their priesthood, their sacrifices, and the Lord himself condescended to be their king. But they soon fell away from Him, and joined themselves to the idolatry of the nations, and it pleased the righteous Lord to punish them, by sending an invading army against Jerusalem, who destroyed it, and led the people into captivity into Babylon, where, as the prophet Jeremiah tells us, l. 7. "all that found them have devoured them, and their adversaries said, 'we offend not, because they have sinned against the Lord, the habitation of justice, even the Lord the hope of their fathers.'" But brethren, we ask again, were the sons of Jacob there consumed? No! seventy years were determined upon them as a punishment for their sins, but not one day passed after the expiration of that period, before the Lord raised them up a deliverer. Cyrus king of Persia was made the instrument in the hands of God, for the restoration of Israel, and once more we find them reinstated in their own land, again possessing the same privileges, though not to the full extent in which they enjoyed them before. Well then may the prophet Malachi mention it as a remarkable fact, that the sons of Jacob were then not consumed. But brethren, if it was an astonishing fact at the time when Malachi prophesied that the sons of Jacob were then



existing, and had not been consumed, is it not an hundred-fold still more marvellous and astonishing, that this should be the case even now? Even after a period of more than eighteen centuries since the commencement of the Christian era, we can say in all truth, "the sons of Jacob are not consumed." This is a fact too notorious to need any proof. They are known to exist in every country, almost in every city—and allow me to say, the individual who is now privileged to address you is a proof of this, for "I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham." And we ask, is it not an hundred-fold more astonishing, that this should be the case even now? For, soon after their being reinstated in their own land, they again sinned against the Lord, and that far more awfully than ever they did before. The eternal Son of God left the throne of His Father's glory, and came into this world, not taking upon Himself the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham—"He came to His own, but His own alas! received Him not," and exclaimed "away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him! we will not have this man to reign over us." Here was a sin far greater than any, nay than all that people ever committed in past ages; and in proportion as the sin was greater, in the same proportion have the judgments of God been greater and heavier upon that nation; for soon after that awful event,—their rejection of the Messiah,—the Lord caused again an invading army to besiege Jerusalem, who destroyed it: not one stone was left upon another of that temple which was said to be the joy of the whole earth; her people were carried into captivity not only into one country, as was the case before, into Babylon, but into every country under heaven, where they have been a reproach and a bye-word, not only for a period of seventy years, as was the case before in Babylon, but for a period of eighteen centuries, during which, it may be said still more emphatically and truly, "all that found them have devoured them, and their adversaries said, we offend not, because they have sinned against the Lord." And would brethren, that we could exclude the Christian church from this charge, for she was foremost in this matter, and during the dark ages of her history, those who called themselves Christians, thought they were doing God service by persecuting the Jews, and actually made use

of this language, saying "we offend not, because they have sinned against the Lord."

We ask then, is it not still more marvellous and astonishing, that notwithstanding all their past experience, they should still be existing and not be consumed? What can be the reason of this? Surely this is an inquiry which every reflecting mind ought to make; can it be because they are so numerous and so mighty, that therefore they have been enabled to withstand all the fiery darts of persecution which have been aimed against them? This we know is not the case: at most, there are supposed to exist but six millions of Jews, in a scattered state, never given to arms, possessing none of those powers by which nations conquer each other. Or can it be for want of persecuting hatred on the part of the nations amongst whom they have been captives? This we know likewise is not the case, for they have been every where hated and spoken against, no where did they find a resting place for the soles of their feet.

II. WHAT THEN IS THE REASON? The text replies, "I am the Lord, I change not, *therefore* ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Had it depended upon the nations of the earth, they would long ago have been consumed, their existence would have been known no more, than that we might have read of them in the pages of history, as we do of other nations far greater and mightier than they, whose existence is known no more. As there was persecuting hatred enough, there was power enough, there was inclination enough, to have caused their total destruction. Or had it depended upon the nations themselves, they would also long ago have been destroyed; for there was smallness of number enough—there was feebleness enough—there was surely sin enough, to have caused this total destruction; but upon none of these things did it depend—"I am the Lord, I change not; *therefore* ye sons of Jacob are not consumed"—"Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever"—"God is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent; hath he said it, and shall he not do it? hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

And now I must refer you to a few of those declarations of the unchanging God, which account for this remarkable fact—the existence of the Jewish nation.

In Leviticus xxvi. a chapter full of the most awful denunciations delivered by Moses in the name of the Lord against Israel, on their disobedience; yet is he made to declare in the midst of it, in v. 44, "and yet for all that, when they"—the sons of Jacob of whom he is speaking in the chapter—"be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them, for I am the Lord their God;" and in Psalm lxxxix., v. 30—34, we read, "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments, if they break my statutes and keep not my commandments"—just as the people of Israel have done, they have forsaken God's son, and do not walk in his judgments, they have broken his statutes, and do not keep his commandments, well, what then? shall they on this account be destroyed? No! "Then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes"—just as that people hath been visited, with the rod of God's indignation, and with the stripes of his judgments—"nevertheless, my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail; my covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips;" and what that covenant is, we have farther from Jer., where the Lord says, in xxx., 11, (and if you look to the preceding verse, you will find Jacob specially addressed) "I am with thee, says the Lord, to save thee, though I make a full end of all nations, whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee, but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished." But, there is one still more remarkable passage in the same prophecy, which accounts for this fact—In Jeremiah xxxi, 35—37—"Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hosts is his name. If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the Lord, if heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel, for all that they have done, saith the Lord."

These, then, are a few of the declara-

tions of the unchanging God, which alone are the reasons why the sons of Jacob are not consumed. God once entered into a covenant with them, and gave them great and precious promises; and though they, on their part, have broken the covenant, and have shown, that man is a mutable creature, that he soon turns away from his God, the Lord on his part changeth not. And here we would observe, by the way, there is contained in this subject, an awful warning to every sinner, as well as abundance of encouragement to every child of God—an awful warning to every sinner, who hath not yet fled for refuge to the only hope set before us in the Gospel; for if in the preservation of Israel, we read as it were in large characters, that "the Lord changeth not," we must learn from it, that God is unchanging in all his declarations; and if He has said, "He that believeth in Christ shall be saved," this He will assuredly fulfil to all his people; the same unchanging God hath also said, "He that believeth not, shall be condemned." If, therefore, there be any such one here present, we would humbly exhort him to consider this, and turn to the Lord whilst it is called to-day, whilst the door of mercy is still open, and whilst the Saviour is ready to receive every penitent sinner.

But there is also abundance of encouragement contained in this subject for every child of God. Many such, I trust, are within my hearing, and to you, dear Christian brethren, I would say, this subject is full of encouragement—you are ready to join in the language of Israel of old, and say "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, we should long ago have become a prey to our enemies, to the great enemy of souls, who is ever going about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour;" but the Lord has kept us to this day, according to his gracious promise, "I will be with you." If then you are in Christ Jesus, we would humbly exhort you, to abide in Him, as branches in the vine, and He has promised, that none shall pluck you out of his hands. Abide in Him, and no enemy shall be able to separate you from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus your Lord. He will guide you here by his counsel, and afterwards He will receive you to eternal glory.

But we have in conclusion briefly to inquire, what may be learned from this

subject, in reference to the very people, whose history we have been considering. And it must at once appear obvious to every reflecting mind, that if the preservation of Israel to this day can be accounted for in no other way than, as the text tells us, "Because the Lord changeth not," then all the promises made to Israel by the same unchanging God, and which have not yet been fulfilled, must receive their accomplishment; and indeed, brethren, time would fail us to enumerate the many and the precious promises, which God has given to his people Israel—we can only recommend to your serious and earnest perusal a few of the leading promises contained in God's holy word, which cannot be said to have already received their fulfilment—see Deut. xxx. 1, 10; from xl. of Isaiah to the end; Jer. xxx. 10, 22; xxxi. 7, 14, 28, 31, 34; Ez. xxxiv. 11, 16; xxxvi. 24, 38; xxxvii. 21, 28; xxxix. 25, 29; Hos. iii. 4, 5; Zech. ii. 10, 13; viii. 1, 8, &c. &c. These are a few of the many promises of the unchanging God, of which the preservation of Israel even warrant us to expect their fulfilment. Here we may learn an important lesson from what is related of two Rabbies, who were one day going towards Jerusalem, when their attention was arrested by seeing a fox going across the mountain of the Lord's house. Rabbi Joshua wept, but Rabbi Eliezer, his companion, laughed. Rabbi Joshua asked, "Why do you laugh?"—and he replied by asking, "Why do you weep?" Rabbi Joshua answered, "So holy was this mountain, that it was written, he that touched it should be stoned, and now I see it profaned by an unclean animal, which brings to my mind the judgments of God, which have come upon my nation as they had been threatened; for it is written in the book of Lamentations, v. 18, 'Because of the mountain of Zion which is desolate, the foxes walk upon it.'" "Oh!" said Rabbi Eliezer, "this is the very reason why I laugh"—he of course meant his laughter as indicative of his inward joy; "for, if God had not fulfilled his threatenings upon Israel, I might be tempted to doubt whether his good promises shall be accomplished; but when I see with mine eyes, that God has fulfilled his threatenings to the very letter, I have thereby a

pledge, that not one of the least of his promises shall fail, but they shall all receive their accomplishment, for," he very justly added, "God is ever more ready to show mercy than judgment." Now, brethren, this Rabbi spoke the mind of God, who has said, "Like as I have been angry with this people, so will I rejoice over them to do them good." Jer. xxxi. 28.

Now, it was this which first led some of the servants of God to unite their efforts in behalf of Israel. They found this people existing—they inquired into the reason, and found that it could be accounted for in no other way, than, as the text tells us, "Because the Lord changeth not," they naturally inferred from it, that all his promises to them must be fulfilled. They found moreover special and divine command to preach the Gospel to them, such as "Repentance and remission of sin should be preached in his name among all nations *beginning at Jerusalem*," Luke xxiv. 47. This may be said to have been the origin of the London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews, in whose behalf I have to appeal to you this morning. It has now existed upwards of thirty years, and has endeavoured to make known the gospel of Christ to the Jews, by means of sending missionaries to them. There are at present forty-seven engaged in this blessed work; the greater part of the number are themselves converted Israelites. The Society also circulates the Sacred Scriptures among the Jews; it instructs the rising generation, where an opportunity offers, by means of establishing schools—several such are now existing in various parts of the world, supported by this Society; and the success which it has pleased God to vouchsafe to these Schools, is such as fully to warrant the undertaking. Many hundreds, nay thousands, of Israelites, have been gained to the Christian Church by baptism. We would then call upon you, Christian friends, to come forward and help the Society in carrying on this great work and labor of love. May the Lord incline your hearts thus to favor Zion; and above all, to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and may you all experience the fulfilment of that promise, "They shall prosper that love thee." Amen.

# THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

## GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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No. XCV.

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PRICE 4D.

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JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH, AS STATED IN THE ELEVENTH ARTICLE OF  
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

### THREE SERMONS

PREACHED IN THE CHAPEL OF THE MOLYNEUX ASYLUM, DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAYS, SEPTEMBER, 8 AND 15, 1839,

BY THE REV. CHARLES M. FLEURY, A.M.

(Chaplain.)

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### FIRST SERMON.

ROMANS iii. 28.

“ Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law.”

THE 11th Article of the Church of England, on this question of justification by faith, you read thus :—

“ We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort ; as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification.”

You perceive there are two parts in the Article, the one is a statement of the

doctrine of justification by faith only, the other is the assertion of the consolatory power of this doctrine ; and as the whole matter is important to the very last degree, we shall take the first part of the Article which asserts the doctrine, this morning, and reserve for our evening deliberation the comforts that flow from it.

You may observe, that this Article is a regular logical inference from the two preceeding ones. The 9th stated, most consistently with Holy Writ, the perfect



depravity of the human race—the excessive sinfulness of man, so that man's nature (as it is written in the Latin copy of the Article,) "*quam longissime distet*," is very far removed—as far as possible, from original righteousness. Then the 10th Article declares, that in connexion with this universal depravity, the will of man is adverse to God, and whenever it is consulted by overtures of kindness from God, it opposes every proposition of mercy, and turns with disdain—yea, with indignation, from his love.

Then consequently, if man be perfectly depraved in his present nature—if his will be alienated from God, how is he to be justified?—Not by works—he has them not—not by his own act towards righteousness, for his will is repugnant to righteousness: it must therefore be concluded, as in the 11th Article, that, if man is to be justified before God, he must be justified freely by grace; that is to say, justified by faith—justified by the sovereign act of divine mercy, exercised in his behalf. Now, precisely the same in matter and in order, is the Apostle's reasoning in this epistle to the Romans. The first chapter opens with a general exposition of the truth, which we are specially insisting upon, that which Luther called—"*articulus stantis aut cadentis ecclesiæ*"—justification by faith only; for when St. Paul shows in the commencement of the epistle, the great value of the Gospel of Christ, he adds, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek, for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith," I he quotes from the Old Testament—"As it is written, the just shall live by faith." Having thus laid down the very fundamental principles of religion, he then goes on regularly and orderly to exhibit the condemnation of man when left to himself, to follow his own devices, or revel in his own fancied wisdom. He

declares, that the invisible things of God are clearly seen by the things that are made, even his eternal power and God-head. So that by common inference—by common place analogy, man is provided with means adequate to attaining a clear comprehension of the divine nature, as far as that nature regards the moral government of the world, and our moral responsibility. The summing up of the first chapter is the condemnation of man; when left to own his wisdom, he becomes rebroate, and God abandons him to his sins. The second chapter exhibits the mode and equity of God's judgment—his judgment on the world at the last, showing that "God will render to every man according to his deeds—to them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honor, and immortality—eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil, of the Jew first and also of the Gentile. But glory, honor and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile, for there is no respect of persons with God." And having thus displayed the mode, and justified the equity of God's judgment at the last, he turns to the work of examining the real state of the case, as it now stands between God and man, in the 3rd chapter, and he there proves, from facts, by quotations made from God's authorised and inspired Word, the universal depravity of man—his moral inability to justify himself, and comes at once, from such infallible premises, to the conclusion which we have read in the text, "Therefore, we conclude, that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."

You observe therefore how harmoniously the statements of our Church flow in accordance with the inspired arguments of the Great Apostle of the Gentiles. When we go into the detail

of this matter of justification by faith, we have just three inquiries to make:—the first is, *What is man's present legal position before God.* 2. *What are the requisites to make up his justification.* 3. *How these requisites are furnished in the dispensation of Christianity.*

#### I. WHAT IS MAN'S PRESENT LEGAL POSITION BEFORE GOD?

We have set before us man's moral state in the 9th Article, and there we find man's moral state repugnant to all good, violently opposed to all virtue, and every thing peculiar to the Godhead; but in this present Article we are forced to look on man's condition in a legal light, because we have to do with a forensic term "justified." We have to find out the law to which man is responsible, and by which he is to be judged. Now, that law of God, however various may be its annunciations, its mode of discovery to the world, is ever the same in essence. That law of God, as the Apostle very admirably, and very powerfully argues, in Romans 1st chapter, that law may be inferred, or deduced, from the survey of God's visible works in creation. We observe a certain administration of justice in the world, flowing down from the authority of God. We observe, that though the whole world is out of course as to righteousness and equity, there is still a moral government exercised in it: and while the Apostle has given us a clue to the discovery of the divine law, the celebrated Butler has followed up the investigation, and has brought out the law of God and truth, from an analogical examination of God's visible government of the world. The law of God, as we read it in the face of the world and in the history of man, is one that takes cognisance of monstrous acts of crime, so that from Nero to the hired assassin, God's judgment overtakes the criminal at last. The law of God is one that enters into the minutest inquest of offences, and consequently, wherever

that law bears on man, though the execution of its sentence may, through purposes of mercy and profers of repentance be delayed, the sentence of God's law must tell with awful power eventually against every unrepented transgression. Again, the law of God may be deduced from our own instinctive sagacity; and here the Apostle has also led us to this recognition of God's law from the conscience of man, for he says, in Romans ii. 14, 15, "When the Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves, which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts, the mean while, accusing or else, excusing one another." There is written on man's conscience an abstract of the divine law, and he who can discern between his right hand and left, between moral good and evil in any sense of the word, may, by deliberate calculation, come to the inference, that there is a law of God, by which, at the last day, he will surely judge the deeds of all men. Our conscience, before it is seared by superstition and excessive crime, as with an hot iron, marks the least iniquity which we perpetrate, and thus answers as a countertype of the great law of God, that shall finally search out the secret interests and desires of the mind, as well as the most hidden deeds of the hand.

Or the law of God may come to us in all perfection upon the page of revelation. We may read and know God's will sent down to us from heaven supernaturally; and then we find, that our conception of the law of God from the world abroad, and our view of the divine law from the world within, that these agree exactly with God's law, when revealed to us from heaven; and we read in that law from heaven what we have before fearfully apprehended, that "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do

them," and, "The soul that sinneth, it shall surely die."

We have thus the law of God open to us; how stands the case now with man—when he is forced to confront that law, and answer to its claims? Why, that as a condemned sinner, he must die—as an accomplished criminal, he must die—as a rebel and transgressor against the divine law in every form, he must die.

## II. WHAT ARE THE REQUISITES TO MAKE UP THE JUSTIFICATION OF MAN BEFORE GOD.

You of course say, first, that all his sins be blotted out—that the remembrance of them be annihilated—that they shall never appear in record against him at the great day of account. Next, you observe, in order to justification, man requires to have ready prepared a perfect righteousness, without blemish or fault—a righteousness that shall answer for his every position of responsibility, and that shall correspond to every act that he was ever called on to perform as a servant of God—a righteousness equivalent to what the works of his whole life should have been. This righteousness, without fault, man must have in order to justification; for justification embraces, not only the pardon of sin, but respects the presentation of the subject in possession of moral virtue—praiseworthy virtue—virtue worthy of eternal reward—that is justification. And more than this, in order to justification, man requires to have his nature so changed, and his disposition so altered and improved, that the carnal enmity or hatred which he had to his Creator shall be deposed, and replaced by love, and intense devotion to the true God. These are the three requisites, that our sins be blotted out—our positive righteousness be exhibited and proved faultless, in order that God may esteem, and applaud, and honor, and reward it—and that our hearts be new formed, or recreated in love.

Need I delay you to ask, have you

these requisites? Do you not see, that if these be requisites for justification, man cannot in himself, or by himself, with any ingenuity or assiduity, or perseverance of labour, produce them. Man is naturally a sinner—practically a sinner—continually a sinner; far from possessing righteousness, he possesses guilt—he is guilt itself, being a sinner in disposition, as well as in every deed of his life. It is obviously impossible that man could blot out his crimes from the book of God's remembrance, and exhibit innocency of life. Man who commits sin in his very devotions, cannot by faultless service atone for past iniquity; man who has not the power to create one single atom of matter, much less to create one single original thought—who has no more power over spirit than over matter, cannot new create his disposition and reform his life, cannot remove his alienation from God, and his hatred of God. Man is helplessness itself—prostrated—perfectly impotent to justify himself before God, if there be value in common sense, or reason, or revelation.

## III. We now come to THE DISPENSATION OF CHRISTIANITY, IN WHICH WE ARE TO FIND ALL THE REQUISITES FOR JUSTIFICATION FURNISHED TO US, through faith in Christ.

The first requisite is, that our sins be blotted out, and our innocency be established before God. This is done through the intervention of Jesus Christ. The doctrine of atonement has in it no difficulty—it is merely a doctrine of substitution—Christ came for us, "to suffer the just for the unjust, to bring us to God;" he appeared as our representative—the representative man for our race, and as the representative man, he received on himself—he had charged on his own soul the iniquities of us all—they were laid on him—imputed, or attributed to him—he was made responsible for them, and called upon to suffer the proportionate curse—that curse he endured—

the whole curse of the law, and endured it, brethren, not by the extinction of his soul—oh! believe not that foul heresy—not by the extinction of his soul, or by the annihilation of his nature in any sense: he died, it is true—died under the sentence of the law, but his soul was not annihilated. Christ suffered the sentence of the law—thus, he was a man—a perfect man—a sinless man; but he was also the infinite God, and by the conjunction of these two perfect natures, he was prepared to stand, and was enabled to endure on himself, in one measured period of time, the infinite wrath of God, that no finite creature could have endured *in time*; he was enabled to endure in a measured period of time, that infinite wrath which we could have endured only throughout the infinite ages of eternity.

Then, brethren, when this punishment was endured, it was terminated, it passed away, and there remained no condemnation for sin, no punishment for those that are interested in this great work of atonement, and who are disciples and members of this same Jesus Christ; who are one with him, who are the persons for whom he suffered, and for whom he was made in all things, a substitute and representative.

We want (the next requisite of justification,) to have a righteousness exhibited for us which God will approve, and co-extensive with our responsibility here on earth. Now, that righteousness, Christ likewise provides. We hold, you perceive, to the doctrine of substitution still, and if there be truth in that doctrine of substitution, if there be any truth in the statements of the Divine Word, we shall find ourselves warranted to regard Christ Jesus as our righteousness as well as our redemption. Now, when it is told in Scripture, "God made him to be sin for us who knew no sin," where the doctrine of substitution is insisted on, it is added,— "that we might be made the righteous-

ness of God in him." When Christ stands as our substitute to endure our sins, he exchanges with us and confers on us all his righteousness, that righteousness wrought out by spotless humanity and essential deity united. These two natures were necessary to render him a perfect and suitable victim or sacrifice: had he died in infancy, he would have been a suitable victim, but he lived out an extended period before he offered himself as our propitiation: he was circumcised as a Jew, and became a debtor to do the whole law; and he did fulfil that law, all righteousness; for whom—for himself? He needed it not—he was innocent in every work—form and quality. He needed it not—possessing the intrinsic and eternal righteousness of God. It pleased him then to live on and fulfil the law,—why? simply that his righteousness might become our righteousness. The doctrine of substitution leads us to conceive that Christ is our righteousness, and then the language of Scripture shows, that he is THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, the name given him by the prophet, and it is upon this the apostle argues, "Jesus Christ who was made unto us, wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption." And when the matter became a personal matter with Paul, you find the anxiety and great desire of his own heart in his epistle to the Philippians, "to come before God," and be found in him, not having his own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, "the righteousness which is of God by faith," this is the apostle's own confession of experience, and statement of doctrine as that doctrine satisfied his own soul. Thus then, you cannot doubt, that this is the doctrine of Sacred Scripture that Christ is our righteousness as well as our propitiation before God; and that this is the doctrine of our church, you will see by turning to the Homily on the salvation of mankind:—



"His great mercy he showed unto us in delivering us from our former captivity, without requiring any ransom to be paid, or amends to be made upon our parts; which thing by us had been impossible to be done. And, whereas it lay not in us to do that, he provided a ransom for us; that was, the most precious body and blood of his own most dear and best beloved Son Jesus Christ; who besides this ransom, fulfilled the Law for us perfectly.—And so the justice of God and his mercy did embrace together, and fulfilled the mystery of our redemption."

"And after this wise to be justified, only by this true and lively faith in Christ, speak all the old and ancient authors, both Greeks and Latins; of whom I will specially rehearse three, Hilary, Basil, and Ambrose. St. Hilary saith these words plainly in the ninth Canon upon Matthew, Faith only justifieth. And St. Basil a Greek author, writeth thus; This is a perfect and whole rejoicing in God, when a man advanceth not himself for his own righteousness; but acknowledgeth himself to lack true justice and righteousness, and to be justified by the only faith in Christ. And Paul, saith he, doth glory in the contempt of his own righteousness, and that he looketh for the righteousness of God by faith. These be the very words of St. Basil. And St. Ambrose a Latin author, saith these words; This is the ordinance of God, that they, which believe in Christ, should be saved without works—by faith only—freely receiving remission of their sins. Consider diligently these words; Without works—by faith only—freely we receive remission of our sins. What can be spoken more plainly, than to say, that freely—without works—by faith only—we obtain remission of sins? These and other like sentences, that we be justified by faith only—freely—and without works, we do read oftentimes in the best and most ancient writer: as, beside Hilary, Basil, and St. Ambrose, before rehearsed, we read the same in Origen, St. Chrysostom, St. Cyprian, St. Augustine, Prosper, Peumenius, Phocius, Bernarcus, Anselm, and many authors, Greek and Latin."

As to the requisite that lastly comes in to make up our own justification before God, we have that furnished in the Gos-

pel dispensation by the Lord Jesus Christ' all in consequence of this great and base-moment doctrine of substitution. In Isaiah, liii. 10, it is said, "it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands;" or as it is translated by Bishop Louth, "he shall see a seed that shall prolong their days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in their hands. When Christ covenanted to offer himself as our substitute, then the Father covenanted, that Christ should, in recompense for that substitution, receive a peculiar people to himself whom he should sanctify, who should be called his seed, and in whom the pleasure of the Lord should be accomplished. That these were the terms of the covenant ratified in heaven before the world was made or man had fallen appears from Isaiah, lix. where it is written in the last two verses," and the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, my Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever," so that, by Christ's convention with the Father, and substitution to be our surety and atonement, he obtained the power to confer on our race his Spirit, that we might be virtually his seed. In St. John's gospel we read, that man is to be born over again before he can see the kingdom of God, must be born of the Holy Spirit by God's good mercy, as we find also from the 1st epistle of St. John, iii. 9, "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot die, because he is born of God," so that according to the terms of the

heavenly compact, Christ our Saviour, Christ our righteousness, Christ our substitute sends down his Spirit to take away the stony heart from man to give him a heart of flesh, a heart of affection, a heart of devotion, to confer on his immortal soul sinless perfection. Brethren, this is the work that Christ accomplishes for his disciples, and yet we do not see half of the glory that God has prepared for them that are interested in Christ.—

We know now, that the soul of man is created in righteousness, once more after the image of him who formed that soul at the first, while the outward flesh remains in corruption and base lust, the devoted and willing slave of the devil. But the time is coming when this mortality shall put on immortality, when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, when death shall be swallowed up in victory, and our outward humanity, our animal frame shall be made to participate in the spiritual creation that God has already conferred on the believing soul. God shall quicken our mortal bodies by the spirit that dwelleth in us, so that the Lord Jesus Christ affords to man by his blood-shedding innocence, annihilation of our sins; by his righteousness, a righteousness, that is able to stand the scrutiny of God's law and judgment at the last day; and by his Holy Spirit, perfection of soul now, and perfection of soul and body at the resurrection when his saints shall be collected together to partake his triumph. And all this, to be had by faith.

We might ask, why did God connect with, and limit to faith this blessing of justification? The best answer probably is, "even so, because it seemed good in his sight." But we can find in the scripture before us, reasons granted to show, why it is, that God did confer upon us justification connected with faith only.—The first reason is, because justification is to be free, so we read in Romans iv. 4, 5, "to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned, of grace, but of debt. But

to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness," and in the 16th verse, "therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all." God has limited justification to this one article of faith, in order that justification might be a free thing independant of our works.

Again, another reason why God has preferred to unite justification with faith, rather than with repentance or contrition or amendment of life, or purity of heart, or any evangelical act or passion, or virtue, is, because faith is the principle and parent source of every virtue; so that if a man once possesses faith, it is to him the spring of a new life, it will purify his heart, it will work through love, it will work out righteousness, practically and personally, and make him a devoted servant of God, and therefore God wisely and rationally has connected justification with faith only, because faith is the parent fountain of all moral and social good.

What is faith? it is time for us to ask. Scripture has not defined for us faith. In Hebrews xi. 1, the apostle says, "now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." There the nature of faith is not defined, but by a figure of speech, called metonymy, the object of faith and the instrument of faith, are put for faith itself: "faith is the substance of things hoped for," the object of faith is here put for faith, "the evidence of things not seen," the evidence is the instrument of faith. In the 11th chap. Hebrews the apostle dwells, not on the nature of faith, but on the *power* of faith, to show, that the fathers who went before us, the righteous in every dispensation, the prophets and apostles when they consented to endure persecution for the sake of the cross, did all this, because they had sufficient inducement "to suffer for the name of Christ, rather than to enjoy

the pleasures of sin for a season," the inducement held out to them was strong and it produced the wise determination they arrived at, to suffer on earth with the people of God and rejoice eternally, rather than to possess relatives and realms here below, with the applause of all men, and receive damnation at the last. Scripture dwells on the power of faith, but we do not find the nature of faith defined : why? True religion is not like a modern science or art that man has devised ; in which science or art it is necessary for those who have originally invented it or constructed it, to bring together an accumulation of proper terms and particular expressions to signify different agents, instrumental or mechanical processes used in such arts or sciences. We find, that the language of scripture is not like the language of man's invention possessing peculiar terms and a set phraseology proper only to itself,—no, this language of scripture is taken from our every day discourse, therefore, the word faith is not defined, being the same word that is used in every day converse ; it is the term simply meaning confidence, and whenever we possess (on divine things) that same faith which we daily exercise on the affairs of this world, there, our justification is secure.

But better still, the word of God gives us to understand what faith is, by a perfect instance. After St. Paul has declared in Romans iii. justification by faith only, he tells you in chap. iv. what it is by an instance, and he shows us, that Abraham was justified not by works but by faith, and that he was called the friend of God. Recollect the time when that took place, and when Abraham was justified by faith only without the works of the law. It is written in Genesis, xv. when Abraham mourned over his childless estate, God brought him forth to the tent door, bid him gaze on the heavens, and "tell the number of the stars, if thou be able to number them : and he said unto him, so shall thy seed be.— And he believed in the Lord, and he

counted it to him for righteousness." There, there was no room for action, no possibility of obedience. God made a promise to him, spoke to him, bare witness to him, and the man believed ; and by this instance of faith, the apostle has done more to declare what faith is than if he had defined it for us in the most logical terms.

What is faith ? Brethren, we may define what is faith for our further information. It is assent to evidence or testimony. Our courts of law are conducted on the assent given to testimony ; our private intercourse is conducted on the assent we give to evidence ; and whenever the character of a witness is unimpeached, when his veracity is known and undoubted, we can no more refuse to receive his testimony than we can refuse to close our senses against the admission of light or sound or feeling.

Faith then is nothing more or less than our compliance with testimony, or assent to evidence. What is the evidence in this case ? It is God, himself, speaking to you by his sacred word, a word which he has put out on the world supported by his own character, commended by his undoubted veracity, a word that has stood for ages on ages, tried, tested, scrutinized, sifted, searched out by all the ingenious artifices of men, and by every such investigation, proved to be absolutely and truly the word of the living God ; the evidence brought before us here is the evidence of Jehovah, which finds in our consciences, approbation ; the character of it is approved in our consciences ; there is not a man so dead, so degraded, so debased, when this word is read in his hearing but that his conscience confesses it to be the word of God ; aye when he hates it, when he gnashes his teeth against it ; still his soul feels that it is God's word.

The evidence here (that is, God's Word,) besides the scrutiny it has undergone to its credit, from man's wisdom and subtle examinations, and the approbation of our own conscience, has within

it, and connected with it, an increasing weight and power—every year adds to this power. The power is prophecy—the fulfilment of prophecy from year to year, adds to the value of the evidence, and increases its ability to convince the soul, and to convert gainsayers. We appeal to the history of nations, to the ripening of the storm against the devoted people of Israel; and while we cannot point out when the storm shall burst upon that devoted people; we can trace the progress of iniquity through the nations, and the approach of that period when the fulness of the Gentiles shall have come, and Jerusalem shall be raised from the dust, to sit a queen for ever. Here there is increasing weight to support the character of this testimony, and now deny the testimony who can—who dare!

Brethren, perhaps this statement of faith appears to you strange, but read what the Apostle St. John has written in his first Epistle, v—9, 10, 11, 12, “If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater, and this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son; he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son, and this is the record that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son; he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” Oh! brethren, be not blasphemers of God’s honor, or liars against God’s veracity—receive God’s testimony—the testimony

of this sacred, unimpeachable word, proved to be true against all human and devilish opposition, each day corroborated by the events of the world, which fulfil its predictions; believe God’s testimony in your own souls, and that testimony is, that whosoever layeth hold on Christ, shall have eternal life.

Once more, and but for a moment, to close this matter, and allow no admission whatever for man’s righteousness in the business of salvation. I must say, that if man was left to collect evidence himself, through the corruption and partiality of his own natural mind, he would seek evidence *against* God; if this testimony of God’s word were left to press on his conscience without extraneous aid or influence, it would fall paralyzed and powerless at his feet. Now, we are told in Scripture, that God, bearing witness through his word, *by the Holy Ghost* to man’s conscience, brings home the testimony to his soul, and when the testimony is thus advanced and brought home by the Holy Ghost, then it is, that man is subdued—that his faith is formed in the Lord Jesus Christ—that he is pardoned, justified, and sanctified for ever. Come, then, beloved, receive ye the witness of Almighty God, and believe on the blessed name of his dear Son to your endless glory; and when that witness, even his word, is laid before you, may the Spirit of truth and power shine into your hearts, and give you to discern the light of the glory of God shining from the face of Jesus Christ.

Amen.



## SERMON II.

ROMANS V. 12.

“Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.  
“By whom also we have access by faith unto this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

The latter part of the 11th Article is—

“WHEREFORE, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort; as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification.”

This morning, we found how the requisites of justification are supplied to us under the scheme of Christianity, and that, “through faith—*faith only*, without the deeds of the law.” This evening we are to consider, in accordance with the latter part of the Article, the moral influence and consolatory influence of this doctrine, justification by faith only. It is pronounced, you perceive by our Article, to be a very wholesome and consolatory doctrine. But, brethren, it would be quite impossible for us to dispose in two discourses of all that could be said on this great Article; you perceive it has the very essence of Christianity in it—of Protestantism in it, and therefore with the Lord’s blessing, on next Sabbath evening we shall examine the negative statements, which conflict with the positive Article of Faith only, and show these negative statements to be utterly fallacious, and insist more distinctly and prominently on the necessity of our receiving the mercy of God by Christ Jesus, in the way he has appointed.

We now address ourselves to *the moral influence of the doctrine, and its consolatory influence.*

I. THE DOCTRINE IS MOST WHOLESOME; that is to say, most profitable for man’s spiritual health, for the moral health of a nation or of the world. And if ever there was a time when some great principle, influence, or power ought to be, brought into effect to regulate society, and rectify all the corrupt views and works of men, now is that time.

We have found, that the doctrine of justification by faith only, has ever been maligned and calumniated, as a doctrine promoting licentiousness, and tending to increase the practical depravity of man. There is an antagonist party to Christianity; and while the doctrine of Christianity, that is to say, justification by faith only, is by that antagonist party censured and condemned as a licentious doctrine, there is a counter-statement, or counter position, set up by that antagonist party, which it is said shall surely produce a moral and healing influence on society. They say preach, that man’s salvation—or justification, depends not in any mode or sort on personal righteousness, but on faith only, and you cast away the reins of lust, and leave man the arbitrary governor of his own works, and put in his own will and pleasure, whether he will, or will not, obey the commands of God; you take away obedience as a necessary ingredient or condition, of salvation, and loose man to all the licentiousness of sin. The counter-statement is, in fact, that justification depends on faith and works conjointly; and where this counter-statement is insisted on, it is asserted, that necessarily good works must be produced, and that this statement shall work with an healing, moral, sanctifying effect on the world at large. Now, we have not so much to combat this counter-doctrine or counter-position, as to its nature and its unscriptural character, as we shall have to do it on next Sabbath evening. We have now only to look on the moral tendency of this counter-statement, as compared with the moral tendency of our Article, “that justification by faith only, is a very wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.”

And first; suppose we pass over the unscriptural nature—the unsoundness—

the untruth of this counter-statement, and view only its moral tendency. Mark it produces no new power or restraint over the corrupt passions of man—that it brings no new spiritual ascendancy over his vicious inclinations—that it deals with him as it finds him. Suppose we grant that the doctrine of justification is, that by faith and works conjointly, man is saved, is not the appeal then made to man's intellect—to man's judgment—to man's conscience—to man's passions—to man's hope of heaven—to man's fear of hell? Is not the dread alternative of heaven or hell, the grand argument and incentive levelled against his common sense, conscience, and passions, to beget in him righteousness? and do you not perceive that the counter position of christianity is utterly defective of power to influence man to righteousness? for it makes an appeal to what? to man's darkened intellect, to man's corrupt heart, to man's vicious passions, depraved faculties—it treats him as he is, as a fallen creature, and it produces to him and engenders within him no new principle or power to work out righteousness.

If however, it be added, in order to make this system still more plausible, that while our justification depends equally on our faith and personal obedience, that God has supplied to every man equally the same measure of grace, and put within the reach of every man the aid of his Holy Spirit. We calmly examine this addition, and we find, the statement is as defective as ever of spiritual energy or influence to control man to obedience.

Before we go to examine the moral tendency of this false doctrine in its new form, when the aid of divine grace is cast in as an adjunct—observe, that the position is self destructive, that there are qualities in it that neutralize and destroy each other, and he that looks for justification on the terms of the statement as it has been reported to you, justification will be never obtain. Were it allowed that man's justification is suspended on the righteousness of Christ, granted to us through faith on the one hand, and on the other hand, upon our personal obedience wrought out by the aid of the divine Spirit,—or in other words, suspended on the compound of Christ's righteousness and our righteousness. On the other hand, Observe the absurdity which must follow; we know the righteousness of Christ is faultless,

spotless, without blemish; we know again, that man, compassed, as he is, with infirmity, depraved as he is in inclination, wicked as he is in passion, distorted, as he is in judgment, inhabiting, as he does, a polluted world, breathing, as he does, a polluted atmosphere, dwelling, where all is tainted with sin,—had he the full power of the Holy Ghost, he could not produce one single act free from the contamination of evil; the body weighs him down, the corrupt flesh embarrasses and impedes all movement towards holiness, and in this evil world, his actions, be they never so much produced by holy desires and sincere wishes to glorify God, still carry with them the traces of iniquity—when presented in the sanctuary and before that God “who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity,” they would be pronounced unclean. And what is this doctrine?—why that our contaminated righteousness is to be amalgamated with the righteousness of Christ, and that the polluted compound is to be the purchase of our justification! But, we have not now to deal with the nature or the untruth of this statement, but with its moral bearing—the statement is, that the Spirit is granted to all men, and that, by the use of that Spirit, righteousness, personal righteousness and obedience being produced and added to the finished righteousness of Christ, we obtain justification.—Where is the moral influence of the doctrine in this form? not to be found; because though the Spirit of God, though divine grace be afforded us, as an instrument to work out and accomplish righteousness, must not the first appeal be made, the awful alternative of life or death be first directed to man's natural conscience, intellect, passions, his love of life, his horror of hell—is not the appeal made in fact to his fallen intelligence; and then, is he not called on, primarily, to act in his own personal identity, and extend his hand to grasp that aid which gives the promise of justification to life eternal!—finally, ultimately, essentially, the appeal is made to man in his personal identity as a fallen creature, and therefore, the doctrine has not in itself, new energy or new spiritual influence to overcome the corruptions of man in his natural position as a fallen creature.

But we look to the practical proof that all false doctrines of men, and especially these false forms of the Gospel never did,

do not, and never can possess power to moralize the human race. We appeal to the fact, that wherever there is a carnal, careless protestant, who lives openly and avowedly in the prosecution of sin, and the indulgence of his vicious habits, or who, though he may not be a man of open and notorious criminality, yet lives in the pleasures of the world, scorning the practice of Christianity, such as active benevolence, and spiritual devotion to God, that wherever such a character is found, the objection which that character or personage brings forward against the Gospel is this very objection, that the doctrine of justification by faith only, is a licentious doctrine—he holds the opposite doctrine, that a man is to be justified by his own righteousness, and while he holds it, mark his conduct—mark the practical proof, that his doctrine produces no moral influence to restrain him from iniquity, and deliver him from the pleasures and sins of the world.

And then we appeal beyond our Protestant, careless brethren, to the Church of Rome in all ages; and wherever the genuine doctrines of Romanism have prevailed, we find, that vice has borne unlimited sway over the votaries of that system. Now, the doctrine of justification by faith only, is condemned in the Articles of Trent, and the counter-doctrine of faith and works combined, is insisted on in the decrees of the self-same Council, under an awful anathema against all who should dare to gainsay the canons of the apostolic church. This is the doctrine—the decreed doctrine of Rome—the taught—the acknowledged doctrine of Rome—that man is to be justified by works and faith; and what moral influence—what moral effect has this counter-position to the essential truth of Christianity produced, since Rome first raised her head of blasphemy against Christ? None! The people have been the slaves of iniquity; whenever the moralizing restraint of Protestantism was taken away, there whole nations sank into licentiousness and the regular commission of crime, such as we dare not even specify by name within these walls. Turn to your own land, and here, where the religion of Protestantism, in its purest form, does exist, as a certain restraint on the vices of Rome, still we find our country is infamous for assassination—for murders, committed under the impulse of ferocious

passion—infamous for the gross sensuality, drunkenness, and debauchery of its inhabitants, who are the devoted vassals of that church, whose doctrine is, that we are to be justified by works and faith together. Practically considered, then, there is no moral influence in this false statement, or counter-position, to the essential truth of Christianity.

But we can appeal to practical proof to show, that there is a wholesome moral influence in the doctrine of justification by faith only. I will not take you to the apostolic times, in which we find the Apostle Paul saying to the men of Corinth, who were once licentious followers of heathen philosophy, “such were some of you, but you are washed, but you are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God,” but I will take you to testimony that came forth after the canon of Scripture was closed, to Pliny, skilled in all the accomplishments and science of his time, who writes to Trajan thus: “They were wont to meet together on a stated day before it was light, and sing among themselves alternately a hymn to Christ as to God; and bind themselves by an oath, not to the commission of any wickedness, but not to be guilty of theft, or robbery, or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor to deny a pledge committed to them when called upon to return it.” This is Pliny’s report, and it shows that the great doctrine of early Christianity (as we know it was then taught, even justification by faith only) produced a pure and healthy tone of morals among its professors. I might take you now to the sister countries, England and Scotland, to the Protestant states abroad in Europe, and show you, that wherever the article of justification by faith only prevails, there is righteousness—there is morality—there is purity—there is a holy health in the deportment and conduct of the people; and wherever the opponent doctrine, or works, prevails, that there—there is an abandonment of all true virtue.

I would appeal to those, who in the present day bring objections to the licentiousness of this doctrine, and ask them out of their own mouth to give testimony, and answer solemnly, and from their consciences, is it not a fact, that the very individuals whom they upbraid as propagators of a licentious doctrine, are



devoted to good works, while the vast majority of mankind, who hold a contrary doctrine, if they be not gross profligates, are careless in their lives, and indifferent to the strict rules of virtue as laid down in the volume of revelation; that they live to the world and to themselves, but not to God?

But, we proceed to the true doctrine, and you shall see that in this doctrine of faith, there is a new and supernatural power to controul the passions of man, and make him obedient to right. First, this doctrine does not stand to challenge man's conscience, or to make an appeal to his fallen intellect, or the influence of his corrupt passions; it places him at once under a new authority—under a new influence; it transfers him from a fallen state into a state of grace, in which he is not so much the agent of holiness, as the *subject* of holiness; he is now put into the hand of the Creator, and he, by his plastic and irresistible power, forms him and moulds him to righteousness. Observe the text, “therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also, we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” We stand in this grace, this grace is not in us or conferred on us, but, we are placed, standing in the grace of God, under the influence of divine grace.—Turn to Ephesians ii. 8, 9, 10, “by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast, for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them;”—“this is the covenant that I will make with them, I will dwell with them and walk with them, saith the Lord, I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” Take an instance—you have Saul of Tarsus, by the grace of God transferred from the power of darkness into the marvellous light and liberty of the Gospel, once the servant of sin, now the subject of holiness, able to say, “in labours more abundant, in deaths oft, I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” The glory is there given to the grace of God working mightily in him who had been a persecutor of the Church till he became the most distin-

guished instance of God's ability to convert man to holiness, and to His glory.

You perceive, then, that the doctrine of justification by faith takes man from his original situation which is corrupt, and puts him under the influence, power, and dominion of divine grace, he is ordained to good works, he is “God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them.” It is as certain then, that while he is under the influence of God, he shall walk in righteousness, as it is certain that a man who receives from God the light and life of nature, shall, while his existence and faculties remain, exercise himself in the common usages of this world.—Wherever there is grace, there is obedience, “we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.”

2ndly—This doctrine has in it a principle of moral power, because it takes away from the justified sinner the paralyzing influence of fear. There is no more fear in the conscience of that man who is justified by faith; the fear that hath torment is cast out, “therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God,” when fear is taken away, the soul is at liberty in the man, and he bounds forward cheerfully to serve his God.—Furthermore, there is infused into him gratitude and love, he trembles not in suspense, whether or not he shall obtain salvation, it is his, he knows he is justified, he knows he is passed from death to life, and he loves that God who loved him and gave his Son for his redemption, he loves that Saviour who suffered for him the last agonies of infinite wrath, he gratefully loves and gratefully adores him; and though we may speak slightly of the power of love, remember, it is the only power that keeps our race together, it is the mother's love that bears with all the weakness of infancy, and all the carelessness and vexations of our helpless years.

3rdly—There is in this same article of justification by faith to be taken into account, that the man who is possessed of the doctrine in his soul, and is thus placed under the dominion of God's grace, is submitted at once to the express, immediate, and constant discipline of the Most High God—he who was an alien, a stranger, a foreigner, is now a fellow-citizen in the household of God—he who once hated



God has become God's child, and as God's child will meet with parental instruction and discipline; the unconverted who know not God, experience not his correcting love, while the believer shall never more pass from under the correcting influence of his tender care. The righteousness of man then is secure when man holds justification by faith only, because the grace of God reigns in him, because gratitude and love are infused into his constitution, because fear that hath torment is taken away, because the discipline of God is exercised over him in all its mercy and purity.

II. As we have thus seen that the doctrine of justification is wholesome, we are to review ITS CONSOLATORY POWER. What consolatory power is there in the counter doctrine? We take a case of tribulation and sorrow,—there is a man whose soul is distracted within him, through dread of God's eternal wrath,—the cause of his misery is the fear that his soul shall be lost. I remember once being called to visit a poor dying sinner, an aged woman who had not attended the means of grace,—and though the words of truth were repeated again and again in her ears, though she was entreated to take comfort, though urged to believe in Christ and be saved, the only words she uttered in reply were, "Oh, my poor soul, my soul, my poor soul!"—there was the horror, there was the apprehension of God's eternal wrath. What comfort is there then, in preaching to such a perishing creature justification by works? The time is past, the opportunity is lost for ever, and life is not to be prolonged. To preach justification by works is to preach ruin, to preach it, is to preach the sealing up of vengeance on the poor soul,—there is no comfort for the dying sinner in man's false doctrine of works, but every comfort in this blessed doctrine before us of justification by faith only. When the jailor of Phillippi said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Paul and Silas preached to him justification by faith only, "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,"—and he, that very night "rejoiced before God with all his house."

Brother sinner, if now, the voice of God is on thy conscience, or the terror of hell hath laid hold on thee, take refuge in this article, and bid fear defiance for ever, "thou shalt not perish, but have everlasting life." Is it not true, has not

the Lord sworn it, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a man keep my saying he shall never see death?" Shall we gainsay the spotless and gracious Jesus? And then, if there be in us a fear of the law, or of the vengeance of God because of any declension, backsliding, unfaithfulness, and unsteadiness, since the first moment of acquaintance with his Christ, has not the same doctrine abundant comfort for us? Is not the throne of grace ever open to our address in prayer? may we not come now to the altar of mercy? may we not come anew to the fountain of cleansing and applying to Jesus, receive once more and again, forgiveness of our backslidings and transgressions, and return to enjoy that peace which is conferred through faith? Now, hear what consolation the writers of our church give us, as referred to in the article.

"And they, which in act or deed do sin after their baptism, when they turn again to God unfeignedly, they are likewise washed by this sacrifice from their sins in such sort, that there remaineth not any spot of sin, that shall be imputed to their damnation. This is that justification, or righteousness, which St. Paul speaketh of, when he saith, No man is justified by the works of the Law, but freely by faith in Jesus Christ. And again he saith, We believe in Jesus Christ, that we be justified freely by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the Law; because that no man shall be justified by the works of the Law."

There is consolation for the mourning believer who grieves and laments over his declensions from his first love.

But if he has fallen into poverty or sickness or any other distress incidental to our present state of life,—what consolation can he draw from this great article of justification by faith only? It tells him, he has peace with God, that, though he be poor, and destitute of this world's wealth, he has the riches of God within him, which the price of ten thousand worlds could not purchase: though he be poor, perishing with disease and want, yet, the doctrine assures him, he is really and absolutely a child of God, and that God loves him with a Father's affection, and that all this sorrow is ministered and measured out to him by divine compassion, to procure for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. As

the child who knows by experience his parent's kindness and tender affection, when some occasional restraint is imposed, or when some necessary medicine bitter and unpallatable is administered, learns to value these proofs of love, so the believer who has tasted the sorrows of adversity finds his abundant consolation in this article, and reads in every affliction a proof of God's parental care.

Brethren, let us go to the death-bed scene of a believer—do we not behold joy on that believer's countenance?—shall we not hear faith whispering, “O death, where is thy sting, O grave, where is thy victory? thanks be to God that giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ my Lord?” Or, shall we go to the judgment seat, and when the assembled world is brought up, and some—how many or how few,—we cannot tell—are there silent in shame, incapable of extenuating transgressions, or pleading in behalf of iniquities perpetrated in this life—Oh, brethren! were we to be arraigned at the bar of God's judgment, and challenged for the deeds done in the body,—which of us could

endure the trial? Not one. Where then is our comfort? In this doctrine of justification by faith only. You turn to the apostle's writings, in Romans viii. 33, 34, you hear him say, “who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” Read the last verse of the next chapter ix, “behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling stone and rock of offence; and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.” Oh, believer on the Lord Jesus Christ, in the day of judgment, you shall not be ashamed, there shall be found none to bear witness against you for the misdeeds of time, no one fault shall be alleged against you, you shall be invested with the righteousness of Jesus, sanctified in soul and body, prepared and appointed to eternal felicity, and saluted with these words alone—“well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

## SERMON III.

ROMANS iii. 21, 22, 23.

“ But now, the righteousness without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets ;

“ Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe ; for there is no difference.

“ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory God ”

THIS text brings us very happily to the conclusion of our subject. We have already viewed, in agreement with the 11th article, the requisites for man's justification. These requisites were, as you recollect, the pardon of all his sins in the first place : 2d, the possession and exhibition of a faultless righteousness, adequate to the term of his life, and the measure of his responsibility : and 3d. newness of nature, spotless, essential, inherent, holiness ; and we saw from the Scripture, that who that believes in Christ has all these great requisites of justification supplied him ; his sins are blotted out, the righteousness of Christ is made his righteousness, and the Spirit of Christ regenerates his soul so as to render that soul holy before God. And we saw also, that the quality and power of that holiness, communicated to man by the Holy Spirit, govern and regulate the actions of his life. Then we examined the last portion of the article, namely, the great privilege and comfort which God confers on believers, such as the peace which passeth all understanding.

This evening, we have to consider a series of negatives ; in order to render our positive propositions still more clear, and lay before you the immense importance of knowing and confessing the glorious fact, that we are and can be justified by faith in Christ only, or by faith alone in Christ. The doctrine of the text, “ the righteousness of God without the law (or without the works of the law) is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe,” is in intimate connexion with the 20th verse which says, “ by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight ;” and with the farther statement of free, unconditional justification found in the 24th verse, “ being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”

I. We observe now, that the scripture insists on it, *there is no such thing as jus-*

*tification solely by man's personal righteousness or man's obedience.* Common sense asserts the same thing. We know, that if there be a God at all to investigate our life here below, and to call us to answer at the last for the deeds done in the body, that however eager may be our efforts in this life to perfect virtue, and however zealous and indefatigable our labours, that while we are still conscious of many infirmities and short comings, of course, the God of holiness, of wisdom, and of all perfection cannot accept at our hands as meritorious of eternal life that imperfect righteousness which alone we could present, and exhibit before him.—

We feel, at this moment, our best endeavours are failures to fulfil what not only the law of God but the law of public opinion, and the law written on our conscience require ;—In our own esteem we are condemnable, how much more therefore do we deserve judgment rather than justification from the God of Heaven.

And while we thus acknowledge our desert of judgment, recollect that it is quite impossible for man to be justified by the works of the law, or personal obedience to any law that ever was published to man, when scripture states, that, “ by the deeds of the law, shall no flesh be justified in his (God's) sight,” or while the sanction of the divine code exists—“ cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” Surely if we offer to God a partial service, when his law claims perfect holiness and entire service, that we may obtain glory, far from standing justified, we must stand condemned. Yea and when we consult the spirit and letter of the law, we find, that for every failure and omission of duty, for every item neglected in our duties, there is whole condemnation pronounced on us as if we had violated every precept, “ he who offends in one point is guilty of all.”

In the very same chapter, in which the Apostle shows us, that it is hopeless to look for eternal life through obedience

to the law of God, because condemnation is proclaimed against every single offence, he adds "but that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident; for the just shall live by faith." There he establishes the positive doctrine of justification by faith only, and he brings in the assertion as clearly and distinctly as if it were the converse of the negative proposition, "by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified."

Let us understand the Apostle's argument here; he quotes from the prophets—he shows, that the whole revelation which God made to man from first to last, was on this principle of justification by faith only, or as the sentence reads in the original, "the just by faith shall live;" that is, not that they who are already just and righteous, shall spend the residue of their days in faith, but, that they who are justified by faith, shall possess eternal life in glory. The Apostle, thus quoting, carries us back to the period when the promises were laid down, to the very day on which our first parents became outcasts from the presence of God. Then was promised the seed of the woman—the Justifier and Saviour. By faith in that Justifier, Abel presented the first acceptable sacrifice, and by justification through faith, though dead, he now speaks to us in the most lively and persuasive language, to adopt the sole terms of justification which God has revealed.

11. *It is impossible for man to be justified, by a combination of faith and works of any sort or character.* First, because this proposition is contrary to what you may term moral sense, or common sense, if you will, or man's moral estimate of things. If it be contended, that the righteousness necessary to justify the sinner, is the righteousness of Christ conveyed to us by faith, combined with man's own righteousness wrought out in obedience to the law of the ten commandments, then the proposition is invalid—is self-destructive. We know the righteousness of Christ to be spotless—we know our own righteousness to be foul, spotted, and polluted with sin; because it is wrought out in fallen humanity—because it is wrought out in a world, where all is unclean—where our very prayers even need to be washed and sanctified from sin. Thus, then, this statement, that the combined righteousness of Christ and of man produces justification, is self-destructive,

and contrary to moral sense; for that righteousness of ours, which we unite with the righteousness of Christ, must defile his righteousness, or render the whole offering incomplete and reprobate in God's esteem.

Again, that this doctrine of a combined righteousness is false, you will find by considering personal righteousness either as done in compliance with the ceremonial law, or with the moral law. If we take it as ceremonial righteousness, then this doctrine of compound righteousness, as the justifying cause of the sinner man, is the old doctrine preached by the pharisaic sect, that troubled the ancient church, saying, "except ye be circumcised, and keep the law, ye cannot be saved, the doctrine condemned by the decree of the assembled Apostles, elders, and church at Jerusalem, ratified by the Spirit of God. Or, if we take this personal righteousness as a moral righteousness, then the Scripture equally condemns the tenet. You recollect what the Apostle writes to the Roman church, a church composed of Gentile as well as Jewish converts—of men who never knew the ceremonial law, and never were placed under the burthensome yoke of its observances, as well as of those, who were from infancy sealed to that yoke by circumcision; and most clearly and strikingly does the Apostle in this epistle address Gentiles and Jews, equally insisting on it, that we are to be justified freely by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, without the deeds of the law:—what law?—the ceremonial law? Yea, and the moral law likewise; for he considers the condition both of the Jew who had the law published to him, with the condition of the Gentile, who had the law written only on his conscience. In the epistle to the Ephesians, the same Apostle of the Gentiles, addressing a church composed almost wholly of men who were never circumcised, and never placed under ceremonial duties, says in chap. ii. 8, 9, "by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast"—works known to the Gentiles as acts of moral righteousness only. Now, brethren, if there be any truth in Scripture, any clearness and perspicuity in the Apostle's statement, you must agree with me, when you consider this doctrine of compound righteousness being the procuring cause of justification



before God, that the Apostle, that is to say, the Holy Ghost writing by his agency, has condemned the doctrine as false, and left you shut up to justification by faith only, without the deeds of the law, whether ceremonial or moral.

III. We have excluded now, justification by works alone, by faith and works combined, and lastly, *we go to exclude the doctrine of justification by an act of faith.* Faith itself does not justify man, man is justified by Christ through faith, that is to say, man is justified *instrumentally* by faith, *causatively* by Christ.—We exclude that false position, that faith or an act of faith causatively justifies, simply by considering the nature of faith. I defined faith to you to be, the assent of the understanding to evidence. God has given evidence, has borne witness, and we assent to that witness, testimony or evidence, this assent is justifying faith—for the word of God declares, that he who receives God's testimony, has set to his seal that He is true, and obtains all the blessings of the new covenant, including of course justification. Now faith, or our assent to God's testimony, is not so much an *act* of the mind, as a *passion* of the mind. When we exercise our intellect on an obtruse proposition, the whole energy of our inward man may be called into positive action; but where, without previous notice, without calling the soul from its chambers of repose, a proposition is announced to us abruptly by one whose character is known and irreproachable, and whose word is truth, we can no more refuse our assent to his evidence or annunciation, than we can refuse to believe the evidence of our common senses when they witness to us, that there is light in this habitation, or tone in the voice that now vibrates within those walls. Faith then, or assent, is no more intrinsically meritorious than the operation of our senses, or than any other common operation, of change, or effect, produced on the soul—and being not meritorious, cannot justify.

More clearly to exhibit to you that the simple act of faith, or rather the passion of faith more properly speaking, does not intrinsically possess a worth that can stand instead of righteousness, and cancel our sins, consider for a moment, how faith is produced and promoted in the soul. It is not a giant effort that man makes in order to comply with the wishes of his God, which giant effort might be

valuable because of its extreme and admirable power, because of all the circumstances of difficulty and opposition which it overcomes, faith is really the work of God, the gift of God, "by grace are ye saved through faith, and that, not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast." Now if faith were the work of man, an act or effort of his soul, the latter part of this infallible passage would contradict the former, which is impossible. Faith then must be a passion, not a work, something that man suffers, not, what he makes, and consequently claims or produces intrinsically no righteousness for the possessor.—The Jews said, "what shall we do that we might work the work of God?" "this" said Christ "is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent:" when a man believes on Christ, who was sent "to seek and to save that which was lost," that belief which he then exercises in his soul, is God's work within him, is as much as consciousness, or judgment, or comparison, or abstraction, or any other faculty or function conferred on him by his Maker. These functions reflect credit on their author, none on their possessor, and faith being one of God's creation, thus gives not credit or justification of itself, or from itself to man, however truly and gloriously it redounds to the honor of Jehovah. The Holy Ghost seals up this view of faith saying to us, "Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." It is Christ then that produces faith within us, that promotes faith in us, continues faith in us, and terminates faith in glory.

We have thus far examined the nature of faith, and we have seen, as it is not man's work, that it possesses no intrinsic merit to stand instead of that righteousness and compliance with the demands of the divine law which we are bound to present before God.

Yet once more, brethren, consider this truth, and confess, that it is impossible our justification can rest on the mere act of faith, when we find the Scriptures positively shew wholly another thing, on which our justification *does* rest. St. Paul, in this 3rd chapter says, (using prepositions variously to bring home the abstract truth to our minds,) "therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law, seeing it is one God which shall justify the, circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith." Then he tells us, in

another place, "we are justified by God's grace;" and in another "we are justified by the blood of Christ;" and so, brethren, all this variety of expression goes to bring before us the truth, that we are justified by God's grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; that he is righteousness, our justifying righteousness, according to the prophet Jeremiah xxiii. 6, "this is his name whereby he shall be called, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**" Can this be so? consult the xxxiii chap. and you find the same title given to Jerusalem, "this is the name wherewith she shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness." Why transfer the name from God unto his redeemed servants? because God is prepared to identify himself with his redeemed people; and God, the righteous Jesus, confers himself and all his merits on that people to their justification, and so, hear the language of the redeemed people under the character of Christ's Spouse—Song of Solomon, vi. 3, "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine," testifying to this great union or identity that God has appointed to be between Christ and the church. Once more, examine the apostle's own confession, recorded in Philippians iii. 9, in which he discards all merit whether ceremonial or moral, and desires to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

Finally, it is alleged against justification by faith only, that James declares, man is not justified by faith only, but by works also, and that he has instanced the case of Abraham to show that Abraham's justification depended not on his faith, but on his faith and works combined. The Apostle Paul has quoted the same words in Romans iv. to prove, that man is justified by faith solely. In order to reconcile this apparent discrepancy, remember, for one moment, that when Abraham believed in God, and was justified through faith, that Abraham stood alone with God at night, and God challenged him to count the stars of heaven, "and said unto him, so shall thy seed be, and he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness." There was there no possibility or opportunity of exercising any act of obedience to add to his faith, he was shut up to faith alone. Look closely and calmly at the passage in St. James, and mark, that he cites an occurrence which

took place forty years after the event referred to by St. Paul, even the offering up of Isaac. When you find so great an interval of time between the occurrence quoted by the Apostles, does it not strike you, that there is no clash between the statements of the holy writers, but that the truth really is, that while St. Paul dwells on justification before God, which is to be had by faith only, the other dwells on justification before the world, which can be had by works only. We profess to be Christians—we may be such and stand justified in God's esteem through faith—tell out to your brethren you are believers—announce your profession, and it cannot be accredited or justified in man's esteem, as sincere, without the appropriate proof of obedience.

Thus, you perceive, that they who would quote against us this epistle of St. James, do garble the Sacred Scriptures, and wrest them to their own destruction.

When we speak thus and say, that the enemies of God, and the enemies of man's salvation have done so and so, it is right to prove that they have done so. You have only to turn to some of the acts of the Council of Trent, and read there, as in the decrees of the 6th Session, doctrines on justification contrary to divine truth, and urged upon the consciences of men, with all the artillery of imprecation.

Canon xi.—"Si quis dixerit, homines justificari vel solâ imputatione justitiæ Christi, vel solâ peccatorum remissione, exclusâ gratiâ et charitate; quæ in cordibus eorum per Spiritum sanctum diffundatur, atque illis inhæreat; aut etiam gratiam, quâ justificamur, esse tantum favorem Dei; anathema sit."

Canon xii.—"Si quis dixerit, fidem justificantem nihil aliud esse quàm fiduciam divinæ misericordiæ, peccata remittentis propter Christum; vel eam fiduciam solam esse, quâ justificamur; anathema sit."

These are not merely the dead letter decrees of the Church of Rome, but the doctrine of that Church, preached from her altars, published in her catechisms, taught to all her adults and children with untiring zeal. It is now but right to hear the voice of our own church on these two points, that we are justified by faith, and by faith only, but not the act of faith, as uttered in her Homilies

In these aforesaid places, the Apostle toucheth specially three things, which must go together for our justification.—Upon God's part, his great mercy and

grace: upon Christ's part, justice; that is, the satisfaction of God's justice, or the price of our redemption, by the offering of his body, and shedding of his blood, with fulfilling of the Law perfectly and thoroughly: and upon our part, true and lively faith in the merits of Jesus Christ; which yet is not ours, but by God's working in us. So that in our justification, there is not only God's mercy and grace, but also his justice; which the Apostle calleth the justice of God; and it consisteth in paying our ransom and fulfilling of the law. And so the grace of God doth not shut out the justice of God in our justification, but only shutteth out the justice of man; that is to say, the justice of our works, as to be merits of deserving our justification. And therefore St. Paul declareth here nothing, upon the behalf of man, concerning his justification, but only a true and lively faith; which nevertheless is the gift of God, and not man's only work without God. And yet, that faith doth not shut out repentance, hope, love, dread, and the fear of God, to be joined with faith in every man that is justified; but it shutteth them out from the office of justifying. So that, although they be all present together in him that is justified, yet they justify not altogether. Neither doth faith shut out the justice of our good works, necessarily to be done afterwards of duty towards God—for we are most bounden to serve God, in doing good deeds commanded by him in his Holy Scripture, all the days of our life—but it excludeth them, so that we may not do them to this intent, to be made just by doing of them. For all the good works, that we can do, be imperfect; and therefore not able to deserve our justification: but our justification doth come freely, by the mere mercy of God; and of so great and free mercy, that, whereas all the world was not able of themselves to pay any part towards their ransom, it pleased our heavenly Father, of his infinite mercy, without any, our desert or deserving, to prepare for us the most precious jewels of Christ's body and blood; whereby our ransom might be fully paid, the Law fulfilled, and his justice fully satisfied. So that Christ is now the righteousness of all them that truly do believe in him. He for them paid their ransom by his death.

He for them fulfilled the Law in his life. So that now in him, and by him, every true Christian man may be called a fulfiller of the Law: for as much as that which their infirmity lacked, Christ's justice hath supplied."

"And therefore we must trust only in God's mercy, and that sacrifice which our High Priest and Saviour Christ Jesus, the Son of God, once offered for us upon the cross, to obtain thereby God's grace, and remission, as well of our original sin in baptism, as of all actual sin committed by us after our baptism, if we truly repent and turn unfeignedly to him again. So that, as St. John Baptist, although he were never so virtuous and godly a man, yet in this matter of forgiving of sin, he did put the people from him, and appointed them unto Christ, saying thus unto them, Behold, yonder is the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world: even so, as great and as godly a virtue as the lively faith is, yet it putteth us from itself, and remitteth, or appointeth us unto Christ, for to have only by him remission of our sins, or justification. So that our faith in Christ, as it were, saith unto us thus: It is not I that take away your sins, but it is Christ only; and to him only I send you for that purpose; forsaking therein all your good virtues, words, thoughts, and works, and only putting your trust in Christ."

You have heard the voice of our church now brethren, in connexion with her articles, and you have examined the Scriptures of the ever blessed God, on this great business of justification, and by all these "I call you to record this day, I am pure from the blood of all men," I have shown you, that as sinners, you can be justified only by God's grace through faith in the finished righteousness of his dear Son; and having done this, it remains for me solely to intreat you, as you value your own souls, and would be the accepted children of the Lord God Almighty, to discard your own righteousness as vile, and cast all your hope, as this, our homily admirably expresses it, on God's mercy and that sacrifice which our High Priest and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Son of God, once offered for us on the cross to obtain God's grace and the remission of all our sins. Amen.

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# THE NEW IRISH PULPIT

OR

## GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—4 COR. 1. 23. 24.

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No. XCVI.

SATURDAY, 9th NOVEMBER, 1839.

PRICE 4D.

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REV. R. C. DILLON.

REV. B. JACOB.

### A SERMON

PREACHED IN BOOTERSTOWN CHURCH, DIOCESE OF DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 27th, 1839.

IN AID OF THE FUNDS OF THE DORCAS SOCIETY,

BY THE REV. R. C. DILLON, D.D.

(Incumbent Minister of Charlotte Chapel, Pimlico; and Sunday Evening Lecturer at St. James's Church, Clerkenwell, London.)

ROMANS VIII. the last two verses.

“ I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

It was said by an inspired Apostle, that among the “things” to be found in St. Paul's writings, were some “*hard to be understood*,” which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction.”

Now, some of these “hard things” are to be found in this chapter. But whence arises the difficulty of understanding them? Not from any obscurity in the things themselves, but from the magnificence, the spirituality, the infinity of the subject, and the necessary limitation of our capacities. Why is it that you cannot fix your eye, even for a few moments, on that beautiful orb, the great luminary

of the day, and then glance at the objects around you, with a distinct perception of any one of them? Is this *darkness*? No, it is excess of *light*. Your eye is dazzled with excessive brightness.

And so, in reference to spiritual and eternal things. I cannot see them as they are, because the organ which I have directed to them is not capable of receiving or bearing their overpowering radiance. The obscurity is not in *them* but in *me*.

Take, for instance, that sublime subject of predestination, as it is touched in the 29th and 30th verses of this chapter. “Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that He might be the



first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified." Now what is to be done with this doctrine? Nothing but to *receive* it, and *adore* what we cannot *comprehend*: to leave God to justify His own character and to apply to ourselves the declaration—"Secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are *revealed* belong unto us and our children for ever." All we know is, that the origin of our salvation is in the secret bosom of Jehovah, lodged in an eternity which our minds have no power to penetrate. Let us come back, then, from the *secret* to the *revealed* will of the Lord our God, and rejoice in the assurance, that "He who spared not his own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, will with him also freely give us all things." For "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth—"or as it had been better rendered—giving the Apostle's answers to his own questions in the form of *interrogatories*—a construction which imparts to them additional force and spirit—"Shall God that justifieth? Who is He that condemneth? Shall (or will) Christ that died?" If accusation be brought at all, it should be brought in the name of *God* and on *His* behalf. But God has *justified* His people. Who then can condemn them? The appointed Judge (with whom lies the power of passing sentence) is the Redeemer himself. Will Christ then *condemn* those for whom he endured the agonies of death—on behalf of whom, as their surety, He was raised from the dead and accepted of the Father, placed at the right hand of God, invested with all power in heaven and earth, that he might save to the uttermost?

Can it be supposed that He will condemn the people, the price of whose redemption was His own blood? So far otherwise, "He will come to be glorified

in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

There are two things in these verses on which I shall this morning engage your attention.

I. *The perils of the Christian's conflict, and*

II. *The pledge of the Christian's victory.*

I. THE PERILS OF THE CHRISTIAN'S CONFLICT.—And what an immense army does the Apostle here put before us in array against the Christian to dispute his path to eternal life! Every thing is enumerated that may be supposed capable of effecting a separation between the Christian and the love of God. The Apostle mentions four distinct couplets of perils—death and life, principalities and powers, things present, and things to come, height and depth. And every one of these enemies, determined to contend every inch of the field with the Christian, must be overcome, before the crown can be put on his head.

The first of these formidable adversaries is *death*—and that death should be an enemy surprises us not. It came in as an enemy to man's nature: "by one man's sin death was brought into our world." But it is of death in some of its most terrible accompaniments, that the Apostle is here speaking, "persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword." And what was the death which some of the first martyrs died? Some were stoned, some were sawn asunder, some were flayed alive, some were burned, others were drowned. Every form of cruelty, in short, which the imagination could devise was resorted to. Conceive, then, brethren, the strength of that principle which could say, that even a death like

any of these could not separate from the love of God.

But how do we find "*life*" among the Christian's enemies? that which is most to be desired? It may be considered his enemy so far as it interposes delay between the Christian and his home; as long as he lives on earth, he lives a dying life. But the Apostle seems to have "*life*" in his view chiefly as it is an instrument in the hands of the great enemy of our souls, to seduce us by its dissipations—*life* to ensnare as well as *death* to terrify. And where is the individual who is always able to stand firm against the seductions of this vanishing and vain world? Who among us could bear to have his day of life always bright and unclouded? A life of unbroken prosperity is always begirt with peril to the Christian. And if death has its terrors, life has its seducements. And were there none in the life of St. Paul? *Who* was St. Paul? a man to be admired, and liable to be flattered—consider what he was in society: what he was in the sect to which he belonged—living a Pharisee, after the most strictest sect of his religion—(I speak of him before his conversion) a Hebrew of the Hebrews—his whole life filled with zeal for the rights and observances of the Mosaic law—conceive of the combination of all these bearing on the proud heart of man, and you will have no difficulty in believing, that not death with all its terrors was so formidable to such a man, as life with such seducements; and yet so sure was he of being kept by the mighty power of God unhurt amidst the snares of life, that he says "I am persuaded that neither death nor life shall be able to separate from the love of God." He will uphold his people not more securely amidst the alarms of the one, than the blandishments of the other.

But the Christian must conflict with other enemies besides death and life, "we wrestle not against flesh and blood merely, but against principalities, against powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

And certain it is that fallen spirits have access to our minds in a way which our minds cannot understand. We know nothing of spirit—of separate spirits—of spirits never invested with material bodies. How little can we know then of the nature of those spiritual unslumbering enemies, who are always on the watch to throw in upon our minds the poison of temptation, who walk up and down the fold, seeking whom they may devour?

And yet, St. Paul in the text, throws down the gauntlet of defiance at the devil and all his principalities and powers: against all those powers and authorities of *men* which hold dominion over the *visible* world, as the devils do over the *invisible*—all are set at defiance.

The Apostle, moreover, takes into the account all "*present*" things: and these are often so embarrassing as greatly to depress and perplex the Christian—domestic trial, Personal infirmities and sickness, langour in devotion, with a thousand nameless circumstances of disquietude and depression. And, brethren, you and I are constantly finding our feelings changing with our circumstances—sometimes we walk in darkness having no light. But how delightful to be able to say with St. Paul, not "*present*" things shall separate us from the love of God: and to see the vessel riding safely, even when the storm is upon her!

The Apostle, however, did not tarry even here. He takes "*things to come*" also into the account, when he is enumerating the perils of the Christian's conflict, and he knew there were some dreadful troubles yet before him. But how does he speak in reference to them? "I am now ready to be offered"—I am just on the point of being offered—I am quite willing to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand, "henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give to me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing?"

Surely, these are not the words of a man speaking from a *prison* ! Surely, they come not from the regions of dismay and sorrow, but from those of light, and life, and glory. But how comes his language to have been thus tintured with the idiom of immortality ? How ? Because his thoughts were in heaven—because his soul was with his Saviour, his heart with this treasure ; therefore it was that “neither things present”—neither his unjust and cruel captivity, as the champion of the Gospel, nor “things to come”—his impending fate, as a martyr as well as champion, could daunt or disturb him. Therefore, it was, he was able to summon into view all those terrible forms of distress enumerated in our text. But for what *end* does he muster this confederated band of woes ? Does he call upon them to avert the sufferings which they inflict ? No, he challenges them to separate the Christian sufferer from the love of Christ. He looks at these unequalled trials only that he may be reminded of the principle which makes them supportable, and he presents himself to us as an instance of the supreme triumph of his love over all earthly calamity. He, whose distress abounded, who was pressed above measure, was yet lifted up by such a mighty faith as enabled him “to *desire* to depart,” not in the gentle decay of exhausted nature ; not in the weaning languor of a sick bed ; not in the calm of a peaceful dissolution, suffering only the pains inseparable from an ordinary death ; but he is prepared to meet the hand of violence. He is ready to pour out his blood upon the scaffold, he is longing to join the souls of them who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, because he was persuaded that neither death in its most terrifying forms, nor life with all its seducing pleasures, nor all the efforts of principalities and powers, how various soever their rank, subtile their artifices, or malignant their rage—“nor things present”—difficult as they are, “nor things to come”—extreme as they may be, nor

“heights” of prosperity, nor “depths” of adversity, “nor any other creature” above or beneath in heaven, earth, or hell, would be able (vehemently as they might try) “to separate him from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

We have now to examine—

II. THE PLEDGE OF THE CHRISTIAN'S VICTORY.—And it may be instructive and useful to us, to see, on what this persuasion—this *pledge of victory* is founded. The grounds of this persuasion may be described as two-fold : *general*, as relating to others ; *particular*, as relating to himself ; the one, the general grounds, creating in him an assurance of *faith* ; the other, the particular grounds, as creating within him the assurance of *hope*. We will notice, first, *the general grounds*. These are such as are revealed in Scripture, and are common to all believers.

1. *The stability of the covenant* which God has made with us in Christ Jesus, warrants an assurance that all who are interested in it shall endure unto the end. It secures to us not only a new heart, but a divine agency causing us to walk in God's statutes. It engages that *God* shall never depart from *us*, nor *we* from *Him*, in short, it promises us grace and glory. Now, this covenant shall not be broken ; if heaven and earth fail, *this* shall not ; there shall not be one jot or tittle of it ever violated. It is “ordered in all things and sure”—consequently the believer shall never be deprived of any of its blessings.

2. *The immutability of the love of God* is another ground of assured faith. He is of one mind and none can turn Him ? There is with Him no variable-ness, or even shadow of turning.

We are all of us, verily, guilty of defective contemplations on the attribute of God's *unchangeableness*. His power, wisdom, and goodness are sounds familiar to our ears : but His immutability throws a brilliancy over all his other perfections ; for with what hopes would the goodness of God fill our minds, or what reverence

would his power command if it were possible that the plans which goodness had framed could alter, or that the power of executing those plans could decrease? But in the supreme Jehovah there can never be the most distant approach to change. "From everlasting to everlasting" He is the same—influenced by no power—affected by no accident—impaired by no time. Of other things some have been, and others shall be; but this is he which is, which was, and which is to come—"the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." And as is his essence, so are his perfections: "his righteousness is like the strong mountains: his mercy is in the heavens; his faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds," and those whom He loveth *once* he loveth *for ever*.

Unhinge this great article of our faith, and you lay the axe to the root of the covenant of grace, and cut down, with one blow, the hope and security of the people of the Lord. But let believers only realize the existence of a God of infinite love, whose power never fails, and whose goodness cannot change, and they attain a fortress in every danger; a refuge amidst all storms; a dwelling place in all generations. Their hearts are fixed, trusting in the Lord: his immutability is the pillar of their hopes; and they are "persuaded that neither death nor life, nor any other creature, can ever separate them from the love of God in Christ Jesus their Lord."

3. For herein, too, lies the security of the Church, it is *the love of God in Christ Jesus*—the offices of the *Son of God*, as well as the unchangeableness of Jehovah himself form another firm basis for the persuasion of the text.

Man, in his highest glory, is a poor, unsettled, uncertain creature, likened to a reed floating on the stream of time, and forced to follow every new direction of the current. But Christ is the "rock of ages;" there is no vicissitude under which His people cannot take sanctuary with Him as a sure and abiding friend; the

guide of their pilgrimage here, and the stay of their souls hereafter. All their patrons may desert them, and all their friends may die, but the Lord still lives who is their rock and their Redeemer.

He did not assume the priestly, prophetic, and kingly offices, merely to put us in a capacity to *save ourselves*; the grand aim and end was that his work might be effectual for the salvation of all whom the Father had given to him. He ever lives to make intercession for them; He is constituted Head over all things to His Church, that none shall be able to pluck His people out of His hands.

Oh! much were it to be wished that there were in all our minds a more adequate sense of the offices which the Redeemer holds, now that he is exalted at His Father's right hand, for then would it awaken the gratitude which slumbers within us and is dead. Can any one for one moment suppose that the Redeemer has quitted the superintendence of a work which His own hands reared, and His own blood ratified? Has He surrendered the spoils of that victory for which He bled? Will He ever do anything to close that entrance to eternal life which it cost Him so much to open? If, when the gall was in His mouth, and the crown of thorns was upon His head, He did not *desert* the work which He had come to accomplish, can it be thought that He *ever* will desert it? That what He died to begin He will not live to carry forward?

Surely, brethren, there is not a sounder and a safer basis for every believer's confidence, whatever be his growth or attainments in the divine life—whether he knows much or little of gospel truth and grace—whether he is in a state of faith, or a state of inquiry—whether he is walking in the broad day-light of advanced experience, or is groping the way of deliverance—not a firmer footing can he get for the assurance of faith, than that which the present position of the great Advocate in the Heavens so abundantly furnishes.



Now we call these the *general* grounds of the Christian's confidence, because he has them in common with others, creating within his bosom an assurance of *faith*.

2. The *particular* grounds of this persuasion which create within the heart the assurance of hope, are the testimony of conscience—the inward evidence—the Spirit's witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God.

Now of those who may be anxious for this strong persuasion, I would ask—are you not sometimes—and too often—found looking into a book which does not belong to you—a book which you cannot understand—the *book of God's secret will*?—and is not the question frequently putting itself—“Am I one of God's elect people? Now you are looking in the wrong book for an answer to this question: you will never find it in the records of the divine decrees, but you will find it in the records of your own conscience; and the book of conscience, though it may not tell you directly in so many words, whether God has chosen *you*, can yet tell whether *you* have chosen God; and if you have, the question is answered, and all is well with you: because if you have chosen God as your portion, and the Lord Jesus as your Redeemer, the testimony of conscience thus becomes indisputable evidence that God had before chosen you; because you never would have loved Him, if he had not first loved you.

Oh! come with me, then, to the fountain of full and overflowing mercy, and drink at that well-spring of joy and consolation which is springing at your feet in this sanctuary this morning. Take the comfort to which you have even now full and free access. Look back on your life, turn over the pages of your own personal history, till you come to that memorable passage therein—it ought to be a point of easy reference—when you were first drawn in your desires towards God; when you gave up your heart of hard-

ness and unbelief, and made the transition from darkness to light. Now who brought you into even your present feelings? Who taught you even the little which you may at present know? Who awakened you out of the sleep of nature? There was a time when the preaching of the cross was foolishness unto you—when its phraseology tired and disgusted you—and when you could not listen for an instant to the warnings of maternal counsel, nor the urgency of ministerial exhortation—when a mother's prayers and a minister's entreaties were alike unheeded by you—when your heart was quite without seriousness, and your every day habits quite without decorum.

Now who put an end to this most wretched state of things? By whose guidance were you led to that book, that conference, or that sermon?—that demonstration of either the *press* or the *preacher* which first made you think? Who sent you that affliction which snatched away from you the friend dear unto you as your own soul—weaned your spirit from earth, and won it over to the deathless and eternal friendship of heaven? Who was it that unsettled your repose in worldly dependencies by the disasters of business, or shook your mind through all its powers by the terrors of the law, or shone upon it by the light of his free Spirit? Was it you *yourself* that originated the process of your own salvation? Yea! rather was it not that merciful and ever-loving God who kept by you in your wanderings from his fold, and made his designs of grace to bear upon you—and showed you the extent of your guilt, with the overpassing extent of the redemption that is provided for it, and who has said “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee?”

Oh! how I wish that I could send you away this morning, taking with you the text as the shield of your poor, doubting, downcast heart against all its despondencies, for then would it do for you two great and glorious things: it would fortify

your *faith*, and perfect that which is lacking in your *hope*.

But methinks I see the question arising in the minds of many now before me—are we to understand the minister as urging upon us—(though we have only lately tasted that the Lord is gracious)—this assurance of hope? I will reply to this question by proposing some others. Can you glorify God's truth *too soon*?—his goodness *too soon*?—his *mercy* and *love too soon*? Can you repose on the atonement and righteousness of the Redeemer *too soon*?—on the guidance and teaching of the Spirit *too soon*? For what purpose did the Lord Jesus come into our world? Was it not to save sinners? For whom did he die? Was it not “the just for the unjust?” For whom did He pour out his soul? Was it not for transgressors? Then if you know and feel yourself to be a sinner, unjust, and a transgressor, why will you not take to yourself the comfort here offered to your acceptance? Why will you not make use of the privilege here consigned to your enjoyment, and claim the legacy in these clauses of your dying master's testament, most evidently bequeathed to your soul?

Oh! think you, that you can *too soon* rely on your illustrious surety?—that you can *too soon* put your case into the great Advocate's hand?—that your distempered soul can *too soon* be placed under the care of the all-wise Physician? Oh! verily not. Fly, then, to the ark of his wounds, and make mention of His righteousness only, and you may take license from that moment to say, “I am persuaded that neither the terrors of death, nor the seducements of life; nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers,—neither the temptations of Satan, nor the persecutions of men; nor anything felt at present, nor feared in future; nor height nor depth, prosperity nor adversity, nor anything else in the whole creation, shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is

in Christ Jesus our Lord;” for “He loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*.”

And now, brethren, I have barely left myself time for saying all that could be said, in commendation of that most valuable and unostentatious society,—the Dorcas Depository—whose interests have drawn us together this morning. But you know its *principles* and its *resources*. Its principles are founded on the great command of our blessed Saviour to “love one another.” It is so entirely actuated by a christian spirit in all its proceedings, that it dispenses its food and clothing to the sick and destitute of this neighbourhood, without any reference to the religious creed. The only introduction which is needed to its funds, is that which poverty bestows. And it is an impressive circumstance, that in this parish, where there are perhaps not 300 acres, there should yet be 500 poor; all of whom are depending for a livelihood, from the beginning to the end of the year, on the most precarious means of support.

The annual visit, indeed, which many of you are pleased to make to this marine and sequestered spot, during the summer months, tells wonderfully on the comforts of the poor. They get temporary employment through your kindness, and the burden of life is materially lessened by the compassion which you have upon them. But, Christian brethren, permit me to remind you, that the summer lasts not all through the year. We are now in the days of autumn; and when we look round on the leaf-strewn walks, and see that which once was green and fresh, now beginning to turn brown and yellow, we cannot but mark them as the tints of decay, forcibly reminding us that the season of winter is at hand.

What, then, is to become of these your poorer brethren in this vicinity, when your sojourn among them touches on its close? To whom are they to look for relief? Allow me to say, that they will

deem it a privilege to look to *you*. And their hope is, that you will allow them so to do. They are venturing to calculate that their friends in the summer will be their friends in the winter; and that, through the benevolence which you will manifest this day, they shall feel no lack of fuel, and of food and clothing during the coming winter.

And who shall say what God in His Providence may intend that winter to be? The prospects of a successful ingathering of the fruits of the earth are said to be most gloomy. Much of that which is to feed and to warm our poor brethren, is likely to perish. The appeal, then, which these destitute creatures have commissioned me to make in their behalf, is founded on an experience of your former kindness to them. It has always been your habit,—and a most goodly habit with you,—ere you exchanged your residence in the country for the more permanent abode in town, to leave behind you some token of gratitude to Almighty God, for the benefit you and your families have derived from residing here. Your question will be “what shall I render unto the Lord for all the benefits that he hath done unto me?” And I feel sure that you will not be the less disposed to open wide your hearts and hands this day, from the consideration, that before another year revolves, some great national change will be effected by Act of Parliament, in the mode of administering relief to the poor. The charity of *law* is, in a very few months, to supersede the charity of *love*. I wish the experiment may succeed. At all events, the labours of your Dorcas Society will then be spared: and what you hereafter give to the poor will be rated upon you as a tax, and not as it is now, solicited from you as a donation.

As this, then, is to be your last Dorcas Society collection, I trust you have determined that it shall not be your *last*.

Many a destitute creature in this neighbourhood is waiting to be relieved by

you—many a poor naked creature is waiting to be clothed—and many that are hungry are waiting to be fed: and it is for you to decide this day, whether the hearth is to be without fire, the table without food, and the children without clothing. You know not, indeed, from what contagious and malignant fever the dwellings of your poor may be preserved this winter, by means of the donations which you present to-day, to the cause of charity.

I cannot permit myself to believe, that any individuals here present will allow the plate to pass them without some substantial token of love to the Redeemer. For, it is His cause we plead to-day. There have been minds indeed, so cool and calculating, and hearts withal so destitute of Christian love, that they never contribute on occasions such as this, because they are not *quite* sure, that all the cases relieved were really *deserving* as well as *distressed*. O! if God were to deal so rigidly with us; if he waited to bestow even his ordinary blessings till we were good enough to deserve them, *who* would be clothed? *who* would be fed? *who* would have a roof to shelter him?

Beware, then, my Christian brethren, as I am sure you will,—that your religion does not assume that narrow and selfish character, which would allow you to pursue your own solitary path to glory, without any desire to supply the wants, and comfort the hearts of others. I have told you how large and liberal is the principle which governs this Society—*It gives to all without distinction of churches or denominations*. Endeavour, then, to show to-day, that you are not among those who “seek their own,” instead of “the things of Christ,” and of their fellow Christians. If happy yourself in that religion of love, which is the religion of the gospel, strive, under the divine blessing, to throw wide the flood-gates of consolation to those around you. Tell them that your God is their God; that your

Father is their Father ; that the “peaceable fruit of righteousness,” which flourishes in *your* vineyard, may flourish in *theirs*. Lead them, especially, to that Comforter whom our Heavenly Master has sent to us. And as the Spirit of God has, from age to age, cried aloud to the desolate heart “*Come,*” and “the Bride,” the Church of the Redeemer, continues to urge the same invitation, “*Come ;*” let all who have listened to this invitation, and welcomed it to their aching hearts, adopt the same heavenly language, and say to every thirsty and famishing soul, “Let him that is athirst, *come ;* and who-

sover will, let him drink of the waters of life freely.”

And now with reference to those corruptible things, silver and gold, permit me to bespeak the favour—as I happen to have the privilege of being *the last* pleader in behalf of the Dorcas Society—of a large and liberal collection. “If thou hast much give plenteously ; if thou hast little, do thy diligence to give gladly of that little ;” always remembering, that “if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man *hath*, and not according to that he hath not.”



## A SERMON

PREACHED IN THE BLIND ASYLUM EPISCOPAL CHAPEL, LIMERICK,

BY THE REV. BENJAMIN JACOB, A.M.

Chaplain.

2 KINGS, xix. 14.

“ And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it : and Hezekiah went up into the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord.”

THREE times are the circumstances connected with the text brought before us in the Word of God, and therefore we may say three times has the Spirit of God called our attention to them : may he do so now, not by the outward letter merely, but by putting forth his energy and gracious influence to impress instruction on our hearts.

Sennacherib, King of Assyria, elated with his success in various countries, was persuaded that nothing could withstand his arms. His father Shalmaneser had carried away Israel captive, “because they obeyed not the voice of the Lord their God, but transgressed his covenant, and all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded, and would not hear them, nor do them ;” and now the son desires to follow up his father's conquests by bringing the kingdom of Judah wholly under his dominion. Before this, Hezekiah, in his zeal for reformation and his people's good, had thrown off the Assyrian yoke, desiring to recognise God only as the ruler of Judah. His conduct arose, not from a spirit of insubordination, but from faith. Ahaz had sinfully, and through unbelieving fear subjected his people and himself to a heathen power ; and Hezekiah desirous to put away the idolatry of his fathers, and to remedy the evil of their misconduct, “removed the high places and brake the images and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made : also he rebelled against the King of Assyria, and served him not.” 2 Kings, xviii. 4-7. Sennacherib therefore invaded Judah ; he thought not that he was a mere rod in the Almighty's hand to execute his purposes ; he acknowledged no principle for his conduct but himself ; he was his own deity, and his opposition was not only to Judah, but to Judah's God. The natural feeling of Hezekiah was that of fear, he made use of all possible means to appease Sen-

nacherib ; but submission made his enemy more unreasonable, he first sent a blasphemous message, and then the letter to which the text alludes. Such overbearing conduct, however, had the effect of reminding Hezekiah that the Lord was his refuge and his strength ; it served to draw him off from the resources of mere human wisdom, and to bring him in earnestness of soul to that throne of grace where the text exhibits him. Have we not reason to say, welcome are the trials which have this effect ? Such calamities as lead us to disburden our hearts before the Lord, are but blessings in disguise, light and momentary afflictions working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

From Hezekiah's conduct let us seek to learn somewhat profitable to ourselves by considering,

I. *That prayer is the believer's privilege.* Viewing the children of God as participating in the troubles of life in common with others, it is indeed a most important privilege, “Man in general is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward.” This world is the valley of Baca, its inhabitants “Bochim-weepers.” Disappointment, bereavement, pain and suffering are the lot of all. Some, no doubt, let their crosses sit lightly on them, but this is not heroism, not victory, but insensibility, callousness, a state far from enviable. Believer and unbeliever, child of God, and servant of sin, alike are subjected to trials. However there exists a great, an important difference, the trials of the one are penal—the indications of sin's desert—the warning that there is a reality in wrath—the unsheathing of the sword of justice, whilst mercy too appears, and lifts her voice to arouse the sinner to his danger, and urge him to the city of refuge ere it be too late. The trials of the other are mercies, the Saviour having drained all the bitterness of wrath—mercies which flesh and blood

can never relish, yet mercies most suited to his present state ; they act the part of winter frosts, which kill the weeds that otherwise would rankly grow—they are the gloom of night which brings to view the glories of the heavens, which otherwise had been hid from man ; the storms which serve to purify the air and dissipate the noxious vapours, yes

“ Trials are the fruits of love,  
Sent in mercy from above.”

They are amongst the “ all things that work together for good to them that love God.” All believers are tried, although in different ways : some are tried by temporal prosperity, some by adversity, according as the divine wisdom sees the spiritual constitution to require a lowering treatment or the reverse ; sometimes the most eminent of the Lord’s servants are most tried, as the Saviour says, “ every branch in me that beareth fruit, he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit.” He will have them attain to higher degrees of eminence, and therefore uses those methods which most effectually weaken earth’s hold upon them. Sometimes too, it requires a stronger process to bring to light the more secret workings of sin and self, which go on in a believer who long has trod the narrow way ; the purest metal is said to require most heat to bring the dross to view. See the scripture history of the Lord’s people, and his treatment of them ; and if we could read their history still more closely, we should find that what things are written are only striking specimens, amongst many of the like nature, though not the same degree. If trials, then, are assigned by a God of infinite mercy, love, and wisdom to his people, it is their privilege to spread their case before him ; look to believers of old—hear David “ I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living ; ” “ Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he will strengthen thine heart ; wait I say on the Lord : ” “ For this, shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found, surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh to him.” “ Trust in him at all times, ye people, pour out your hearts before him, God is a refuge for us.” Hear Job, “ Though he slay me yet will I trust in him.” Look at Moses, Ezra, Nehemiah ; see Jonah crying with acceptance from the fish’s belly,

and especially see Hezekiah spreading the letter before the Lord.

What was the resource of these in trouble ? even what the Psalmist expresses, “ God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble ; ” “ The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.” Oh, my dear friends, if such was the privilege of the church of old, how much more clearly manifest is it in the gospel light ? “ We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, let us, therefore, come boldly to a throne of grace, to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

Yes, prayer is the privilege of God’s dear children—of the blood-washed followers of the Lamb ; a privilege, too, the value of which is best known as it is most wanted.

This earth is the ground for prayer, because here self remains, and the tendency in self to stand independently of God. The Lord in mercy, from time to time, reminds his people of their dependent state, that they may be aroused to draw supplies from him, their living head, their source of grace. Not only before conversion, would man lay a foundation independent of the Saviour, but after conversion that tendency remains. It was this which stirred David to say, “ in my prosperity I shall never be moved,” but he was taught his utter weakness, his need of constant dependence, by the hidings of God’s face, and led to see and acknowledge, “ Lord, thou by thy favor hast made my mountain to stand strong.”

Prayer has been called “ the outlet of trouble, and the inlet of comfort ; ” it serves as the open window to a heated room, to remove what is oppressive, and admit what is refreshing. Prayer is a duty—not a mere duty however—but a precious privilege ; indeed all duties are privileges and blessings if rightly understood ; God never assigns or commands anything which is not for the good of those on whom it is enjoined. Prayer is the choicest privilege of earth ; it is the intercourse with heaven—the speaking to God as to a Father and a Friend ; it is not only conformity to Christ’s Spirit, but the joining in very act with Son and Spirit, at the very time and for the very object in which they are engaged. Christ not only prayed on earth, but is

gone to pray in heaven, and has sent his Spirit to take his place below. Oh ! let us look at Son and Spirit pleading, would they ever have assumed the office, but that they saw the helpless state of man, and volunteered to plead in and for him ? They pray for man ; it is their pleasure ; and if man be permitted to conjoin with them in prayer, is it not a blessed privilege that he may so do ?

It requires no lengthened statements to convince the believer that prayer is his privilege : no ! experience tells him. Ask him when he feels most happy, when he is most elevated above the things which tend to lower and distress him ?—'tis when his heart is most drawn out in prayer—'tis when he most feels his own worthlessness, and yet knows that the fullness and riches of a Saviour are before him—'tis when in the prayer of faith he claims those riches as his own, whilst in the spirit of adoption he looks up and cries " Abba Father." Is it a privilege to have a end in power—to have him sympathise, help, and comfort ? then surely it is, a privilege to have Christ's ear at all times, and to find him ready to attend at any moment as though our business were his sole concern.

II. *Let us consider Hezekiah's conduct and prayer as a test of the real state of the heart.*

We are told, 2 Kings, xix. 1. what was his great resource. Prayer was his habit ; not the mere exclamation, nor sudden feeling when danger threatened, which men have by instinct (even at scoffing Paine was heard to call on Jesus in a storm,) no ! we are told " Hezekiah trusted in the Lord " " he clave to the Lord ; " such expressions imply the habit of prayer ; when trouble came he had not to commence an acquaintance with God. Oh ! how sad is it in the day of distress to hear and witness persons writhing under the rod of affliction, wondering whether there is any use in prayer ; whether a God so long neglected will now attend : the very awkwardness of the attempt, the hesitation and uncertainty of the manner, witness it is only fear that brings them to their knees. But let us see what is our resource, what our conduct in difficulty ? Is our impulse to run to man for his advice or sympathy ? Is it our wish that some friend who had before assisted us by his presence were now at hand ? Is it our effort to compose our minds by

reasoning with ourselves ? Is it our endeavour to put the subject from us, and so engross ourselves with other things as to leave no time to think upon it ? Or do we by a kind of spiritual instinct betake ourselves to our closet ? Does then the throne of grace stand out to view as a well tried refuge ? can we look up with thankfulness that no circumstance can preclude our access there ? and is our comfort in beholding Him who knows experimentally the feelings of humanity ? Why are afflictions called trials ? Is it not because they test our principles ? they prove to these what the storm does to the strength and building of a ship—they shew too whether the anchor of the soul is sure and steadfast—they indicate to what the affections are supremely given, whether to the creature or the Creator. When trouble and bereavement come, some seem quite overwhelmed ; Oh ! how bitter is the cry so often heard at such a time—" What shall I do ? what shall I do ? " the very repetition of the question exhibiting the perplexity and tossings of a soul whose earthly cords are snapped asunder, whilst it knows nothing by its past experience of a rest in God. See another of a different mental constitution, but of equal inexperience in the things of God ; his worldly hopes are blighted, he has not looked beyond them—the loss to him seems quite irreparable—nothing can fill up the void—a deep seated melancholy which nothing can dispel has fixed its hold upon him, and he goes through life mechanically, a weary wanderer, as though hope and pleasure had bid farewell to him for ever. Some, on the contrary, having a natural strength of mind, make a great effort, and proudly rise above the stroke ; they are inwardly distressed, but are too proud to show their feeling, and so, looking to their own natural strength, they lose the lesson which they might have learned, and become hardened and insensible. Others again murmur, and seem to find their consolation in repining at God's dealings, and calling his goodness into question, forgetful, that the manifestation in Jesus Christ of his tender compassion and his love towards sinners should for ever check all imputation of harshness in his character. Oh ! how various are the results of the visitations of God's providence ! here may be found one nestling himself in his bed of trouble, as though it were his covering from future suffering, and strength-



ening himself for a coming judgment in the persuasion that he is here paying the penalty of sin's desert : whilst there, is to be seen an infatuated being clinging with more eagerness to that world whose comforts he has just found vain and fleeting.

But whilst there are many devices in the hearts of men in their natural state, the christian's resource is prayer ; if he had been remiss before, he finds the disappointment of his earthly schemes a call to remind him that this is not his rest, whilst it draws him more closely to his God. He is not like one at his wits' end, perplexed and despairing—no ! his feelings are as acute, his sense of suffering quite as keen as other men's, but he knows the balm, the sympathy of the Saviour and the comforts of the Spirit are close at hand. Difficulties may surround him, but he is taught, there must be some way of escape ; he takes hold on the promises which are effectually secured to him by union with his covenant head ; he pleads them in the name of Jesus, and he knows, God cannot deny himself : he is fully alive to his situation, whether one of difficulty or danger, but he is composed and tranquil, whilst he stays himself on God : he is active as others in the use of means ; yea, the composure arising from casting all his care upon the Lord gives him a decided advantage ; nothing is omitted which seems right to be done ; but the God of means is his resource, as is strikingly exhibited in Hezekiah, 2Chron. xxxii. 2—8.—“ And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem, he took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains which were without the city, and they did help him. So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land, saying, why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water ? Also he strengthened himself, and built up all the wall that was broken, and raised it up to the towers, and another wall without, and repaired Millo in the city of David, and made darts and shields in abundance. And he set captains of war over the people, and gathered them together to him in the street of the gate of the city, and spake comfortably to them saying, be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him, for

there be more with us than with him, With him is an arm of flesh ; but with us is the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.” Prayer was never intended to encourage indolence, but to procure energy for exertion : and what plans are so effectual as those to which the Lord vouchsafes his blessing ?

III. Let us consider Hezekiah's prayer as an example of the manner of prayer. There are some who recognize the duty, and yet are quite ignorant of the manner ; they are satisfied with general expressions ; there is no explicit statement of their wants. Some have said their prayers from childhood, and yet have never prayed. The Pharisees made long prayers, but were they a spiritual sacrifice ? No ! Very many conclude their petitions with the expression, “ through Jesus Christ,” who attach no distinct idea to it, the words seem to come naturally at the close even as “ Amen,” and what was intended to keep continually before the mind the only ground for a sinner's access unto God, has degenerated into a mere form. There are many whose prayer as they term it is the Lord's Prayer and the Creed. But, however, well it may be to repeat the Creed for fixing in the mind a clear and sound confession of faith, to substitute such a statement for prayer is to show utter ignorance on the subject ; and I am decided in saying that such as use even that best form of prayer that can be given, and content themselves therewith, repeat it as the superstitious would a charm, or as a bird that hath no understanding a form it has been taught. Some again use prayers which are most excellent, part of the Liturgy, or forms composed by men of God as helps to prayer, and yet they have comparatively little profit. Why ? because they confine themselves to these, and so are occupied with general expressions only. One great reason why souls make so little progress, why the complaint “ my leanness, my leanness,” is applicable to so many, is, that there is no particularising of wants and objects. Precomposed forms are desirable for the expression of wants and feelings in public prayer, because there the expressions are intended to be applicable to all : such forms may likewise be exceedingly useful in expressing many, very many wants of the Christian in pri-



vate, and in suggesting some which otherwise might remain unnoticed ; but they should be used as helps, not as substitutes for our own particular petitions, for it may in truth be said, that no prayer composed by one man can be exactly what another wants ; there must be something deficient or superfluous ; for as each has his peculiar features and feelings, so each has his peculiar circumstances and wants. There are general wants, such as the want of pardon, of grace, of spirituality of mind, of deadness to the world ; but every day, every hour brings to each Christian some cause for varying his petitions ; he may hunt through books to find something suited to himself, but in the search, the desire of prayer may quite subside, and the very exigency which called for prayer give way to something new.

Some of course are ready to say " Oh I should feel quite at a loss "—" I could not find language." Ah ! my dear friends, in general where there is a sense of pressing want, words come naturally to the lips ; but granting that they did not, have we not to do with one who " knows our necessities before we ask, and our ignorance in asking "? Does a tender parent require the infant lips to use expressions well arranged before he will supply the wants of his own dear child ? It is desirable we should have fluency of expression ; but let it be remembered, that fluency itself is not prayer. Sometimes too, there may be unutterable wants, and therefore unutterable desires : and there are times in the believer's experience when he finds language quite inadequate to convey the stretching forth of the soul in earnest longings after spiritual things : but we are told that " the Spirit in such cases helpeth our infirmity and maketh intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered." " And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." And is there not one who makes it his business now to plead his people's cause ? and as he presents, secures, by the incense of his own merits, the full acceptance of the poor petitions of his helpless brethren ? Some deem it presumption to bring their every want and feeling forward, and a trifling with the Majesty of Heaven to call his observation to their every day concerns. My dear friends, this is the covert language of in-

fidelity ; in seeming to uphold God's Majesty, it undermines his Providence, it makes man wiser than that God who numbers our very hairs, whilst it attempts to decide on what is suited to his character, more judiciously than he himself. But let us look back at things apparently of no moment, to what momentous consequences have they led ? and then ask ourselves, are we competent to decide as to what is important or the reverse. Oh ! to regard his care in all, is not to lower God, but to elevate our own souls, and as we should seek, whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, to do all to his glory, so should we ask of Him to " prevent us in all our doings with his most gracious favour, and to further us with his continual help." " The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work ;" but we are not confined to such grand and striking proofs of wisdom and direction, but we may turn to the sparrow, the ant, and the mite, or the very minutest beings in nature's varied and extensive kingdom, and behold in their beauty, in the adaptation of their parts to the very place and circumstances of their being, clear indications, not merely of the divine skill of the Creator, but likewise of his attention and his constant care. How then can we admit such minute care and concern in the works of creation and of Providence, and deny it in His kingdom of grace, knowing that the Lord's people are his peculiar portion, the objects of his *especial* care.

4. But let us take Hezekiah as a *model for our imitation*. How did he particularize ? " he spreads the letter before the Lord ;" he takes each part, and reasons on it ; and if we compare the particulars of the letter with what is specified in the prayer, we shall see the meaning of his spreading the letter before the Lord. His was not a general prayer for deliverance, but a specifying of particulars, thus had he abundant matter for his petitions, thus by opening all his case, he disburdened his own heart, thus he put God in remembrance, and involved his glory with his people's safety.

Such should be the manner of prayer, then there will not be wandering or coldness. Oh ! if there were more consideration of our wants, there could not be such vagueness in our petitions : then in confession, we should not only say " we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and have done

those things which we ought not to have done;" but thinking over the particular transgressions and omissions, in order to our specifying them, we could not but feel more humility, more loathing of sin, more distrust of self, more value for the finished work of Christ, and consequently more life in our petitions. This is what is so much wanted; general expressions are signs of little feeling, and are soon forgotten, and so the spiritual strength does not progress: there is a sameness in the feelings of one day and those of another, when there should be an increase not only in Christian experience, but in Christian grace.

The same may be said of adoration in prayer; the Psalmist not only says "Bless the Lord O my soul"! but adds "and forget not all his benefits." It is well to say in public "we bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life;" but in private there should be a marking of the Lord's gracious dealings, particularising of his benefits, an acknowledgement of his goodness in giving us refreshing views of Jesus, in testifying to our acceptance, and reviving us when desponding. Yes! there should be this recognition of his hand and gracious care directing us in difficulties, strengthening us under particular temptations, giving us wisdom in our intercourse with others, restraining our passions under provocation, subduing our pride when any thing tended to excite it and causing us to hear when most required a voice behind us saying "This is the way, walk ye in it." Ah! surely this would furnish ground for praise, and we should not so often hasten from our knees, as though we had discharged a duty, and not enjoyed a privilege.

But it may be asked, is the believer authorised to expect his every prayer to be answered? Some passages of Scripture seem to imply this; but whilst I am satisfied that God never said to the seed of Jacob, "seek ye my face in vain," I think it more than questionable that we are authorised to expect that all our petitions shall meet with that answer which we desire. We find Moses praying that he may be allowed an entrance to the Land of Promise, but the Lord does not gratify his request. We have David pleading for the life of his child, and yet it died—Paul thrice beseeching for the removal of his affliction, but it remained; and even the Lord Jesus presenting a

request, which seemed unanswered. The expressions, then, are not to be taken absolutely as though every thing, without exception, were promised to prayer. No! they should be explained according to 1 John v, 14. "This is the confidence we have in Him, that if we ask any thing according to His will, he heareth us." In fact, considering man's weakness, and his ignorance, an unlimited promise would prove a curse, rather than a blessing; he knows not what to ask—he would frequently, in the ignorance of a child, call out for what would be no less than poison to his soul; and, in the weakness of his flesh, shrink from the sharp but efficacious remedy resorted to by his Heavenly Father, to prevent the spreading of sin's deadly cancer. The great point is to have grace to say in truth, "thy will be done," even as the Saviour qualified His petition, by an entire reference to His Father's will.

Sometimes, desires which seem most reasonable are denied, but still God's gracious character as a "Hearer of prayer" is not to be impeached; if he gives not what is desired, he gives more than an equivalent. "My grace is sufficient for thee," was His word to Paul, and is still His word to such as look to Him in truth. And surely the child who knows his father's love and wisdom, may well be satisfied, and feel assured, his parent is not unmindful of him, though he gives not what he asks. Sometimes the believer's prayer has been earnest for dear friends and relatives, apparently without effect; but no doubt the day of judgment will adduce many testimonies to the efficacy of prayers for others, which for wise reasons were not made apparent here below. The parent then, may see the prodgal reclaimed, in answer to petitions which had seemed in vain: the anxious child may view the parent whom he had committed frequently, and it may be with his dying breath, to the God of grace and mercy, entered on the same glory with himself: husband and wife then may meet in a spiritual union which had not existed here; ministers may behold many as their "joy and crown of rejoicing in the presence of the Lord," for whom their toil, anxiety, and prayers seemed unavailing; and friend may recognise that friend, whose name and case were graven on his heart, whenever he approached the throne of grace.

Still, however, there are cases where

there is not left the slightest ground for hope; what then has become of prayer? it has not been unheeded, it has returned seven-fold into the suppliant's bosom: even were it nothing more, it has availed for this, it has kept up the closeness of spiritual intercourse, it has drawn out the heart and affections unto God, and it has tended to ripen the soul for the enjoyment of its full and heavenly communion: for surely the experience of the child of God can testify, that he may be often earnest in his pleadings for a dear relative or friend, when he is even cold and spiritless for himself.

Now it may seem that I have addressed those only who understand the nature of prayer; in order to stir them up to prize their privilege more highly—I have addressed the prayerless sinner likewise. The subject has been prayer—the breath of spiritual life; therefore, whatever has been said on its nature, its fervour, or its matter, has been a strong though indirect charge against him whose conscience testifies he knows not of it. He that lives without prayer, private spiritual prayer, “is dead while he liveth,” he might shrink from the company of an Atheist, but it is practical Atheism, it is worse than Atheism, to acknowledge God, and yet live independent of Him. “The Heathen in his blindness bows down to wood and stone,” but here and there are to be found those, who, acknowledging that there is an Almighty Searcher of all hearts, have no cloak for their neglect, living without prayer, and therefore, “without hope and without God in the world”—Graceless, prayerless beings! what if you only come to know prayer's value as death puts forth his grasp to seize your startled souls! or if, neglecting it here, you be doomed to learn it hereafter, in asking one drop of water to cool your burning thirst, or in seeking a death to misery, which must endure for ever!

There are others who go through the form of prayer in the morning and at night: in what are you better than they who have been just addressed? you go on your knees to God when you have risen from your beds, and then forget Him until the night reminds you of the habit acquired in your infancy, a habit which is observed, though the real intention is lost sight of; but what is this? a kind of

compromise, a kind of salvo to your conscience, for neglect throughout the entire day? oh, be assured that God is not mocked with such lip service, he that prays aright at one time, is in the spirit, though not in the attitude or expression of prayer at another, ready to look up at any time, and realise God's presence with him.

A few words more in conclusion. Prayer has been the subject of this discourse; but oh, let no one for a moment think that prayer is in any wise the foundation for the sinner's hope. No! in no wise! prayer is really the language of a believer; and who is he? one who has in earnest sought, or is seeking now for refuge to Christ Jesus, the only hope of ruined sinners. True prayer acknowledges its nothingness, and fixes its hold on Jesus, even for its own acceptance, and therefore it pretends not to do that for sinners, which it cannot for itself: even the disposition to pray is not self-originated; it is communicated from above; it owes its own rise, its fervour, its acceptance, to the free grace of God alone; it is the expression of want, of emptiness, of dependence on another object; its very tone and matter bespeak incapacity to help. Oh, let none then rest satisfied with that which acknowledges so continually, it is only for the sake of Jesus, God can listen to it. I do not want to speculate, I cannot say what is the first infusion of grace into the soul; how it is the Spirit works; how he effects faith in Christ; but I know that prayer, whilst it is the privilege of believers, is likewise the duty of every sinner; that though no prayer can ascend with acceptance, but what comes from the Holy Spirit work's, and is presented through the mediation of the Saviour, yet are we to pray for that Holy Spirit: the exact system will appear hereafter, the duty is before us now, and with it the gracious promise that “our Heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.”

Only, my dear friends, see that in your prayers you look at Christ Jesus clearly, lest possibly the privilege be made a snare, a painted veil to engross you with itself, whilst it hides the Saviour from your view.

# THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

## GOSPEL PREACHER.

“We preach Christ crucified—

“Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. 1, 23, 24.

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REV. JAMES KELLY.

REV. H. VERSCHOYLE.

NATIONAL EDUCATION.

### A SERMON

PREACHED IN STILLORGAN CHURCH, DIOCESE OF DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1839,

BY THE REV. JAMES KELLY, A. M.

(Incumbent of the Parish.)

ROMANS—VIII. 8.

“So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God.”

THE subject, my beloved brethren, which comes before our attention this morning, next only in importance to the worship of our God and our personal edification in hearing his word, is that of the education of the young. And what is education? Education, I would say, is to human nature what cultivation is to the soil: there is a striking analogy between the two things. In the case of cultivating the soil, the character of the soil becomes a necessary matter for consideration, in order to decide upon what the cultivation should be. So, in determining what education we should give the young, it is a necessary thing to inquire, what is the character, what is the condi-

tion of human nature. If the nature of the soil be very good, and if it be impregnated with good seeds that will grow up spontaneously, then the husbandman's labour need not go farther than manuring the soil well: but if the soil be such as to have weeds springing out of it in rank luxuriance, and no good seed occupying it, then, methinks (and I am sure you will all agree with me) that the husbandman's labour should go beyond manuring the soil, and that he should aim at eradicating the weeds, and sowing good seed.

Similarly, dear brethren, in education, if human nature were good—if human nature had the seeds of good within



itself, so that it was only necessary that they should be developed, then all that would be required would be to give knowledge, and so increase the prolific power of that inherent seed. But, if human nature be what God's blessed word asserts it to be, radically corrupt—then, our education of that nature must be very cautiously attended to, and we must take care that in imparting knowledge, we impart that which will be an antidote to the corruption deplored. It is, then, because of this portion of the word of God, describing human nature, that I have brought it before you this day; and may God's blessing aid us in the consideration of the subject.

If you turn now to the seventh verse, the verse immediately preceding our text, you will see the assertion which the Holy Ghost makes here concerning human nature. It is this, "the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." "The carnal mind" may be translated, "the wisdom of the flesh, the very essence of the flesh." Hence it may be said, that *the best part of that nature which we have, the "wisdom" of it is "enmity against God;"* and observe it is not merely alienated from God, but it is positively in itself *enmity against God*. This is a heavy count, a heavy indictment against our nature; but is it not capable of being well substantiated. Let a multitude of men be addressed—men whose habits are contrary to the word of God, men living without God in the world;—let the topic selected on which to address them be that which is to be most congenial to them, and which is to give them most pleasure, and what, I ask you, will that topic be?—the non-existence of God!—and it is not mere speculation on my part when I say this, for there are large masses of our fellow men in England, gathered together on this very day, for the purpose of hearing proved that the existence of God is only a bug-bear, an invention of interested

priests, and that there is no authority for such belief. Brethren, I am only telling you the truth when I assert this; I have heard it from those who were personal spectators of the awful scene. A class of men, called Socialists, meet together in the large provincial towns of England, on the Lord's Day, and a lecturer addresses them; and this is what he aims at proving, that religion is altogether the invention of man, Christianity especially, and that there is no God. And it is just what we should have expected; for God is against the transgressor—he is necessarily opposed to sin—and they who are conscious of sin must dread the thought of God, must disrelish his character, and therefore be open to receive the impression, if it be sought to be made on them, that there is no such being: and, surely, the very circumstance of a man not having congeniality with the character and existence of God—surely, this is a proof that he hates God; when he wants the congeniality so far as to prefer that there was no such Being.

Can there be a greater proof than this given of the deep hatred that is in the mind, the carnal mind, against God? If a fellow creature longed for your death, and would be most gratified by the intelligence that you were no more in the land of the living, would it not be considered the strongest proof of his being at enmity with you? Well, such proof we have of man's hatred of God in the fact of the most welcome theme to him being, "that there is no God."

But, I need not confine my observations to that dissolute and licentious class of men I am speaking of. Dear brethren, it is the same with all who are not converted by the power of God's Spirit; their minds are enmity against God—not, perhaps, against *a* God, a God of their own devising, a God of their own fancy—but against the God of the Bible. The God of the Bible is a holy God—the God of the Bible hates sin—the God of the Bible is not all mercy—he is not

weakness or frailty, as many imagine, but he who is acknowledged by thousands, even those who call themselves Christians, is a God of such character as this; and if the truth is sought to be pressed on their minds, that our God whom we serve is a God that will take vengeance on the ungodly—that he is one that has not only loved sinners and given his Son to die for them, and opened a way of salvation for them in order to welcome them to his arms and rejoice over them, but that he is one who will take vengeance on all them that obey not the Gospel; that he is a God who cannot be enjoyed by the wicked, that without holiness no one shall see him;—I say if this truth be pressed on the minds of thousands, they are repelled from it, and they will say, as the only loop-hole whereby to escape, “it is not true, it is not possible to suppose that God will sentence his creatures to eternal misery; our reason revolts against it.” I have heard it from many who call themselves Christians; and I say, dear brethren, this is a proof that that indictment which you have all assented to as chargeable against the class of men I have described to you is also chargeable against the whole human family, “the carnal mind is enmity against God.”

But not to stop here, the Apostle draws a conclusion from this, and it is his conclusion that I have selected for my text. He draws it from the fact of the wisdom of the flesh being enmity against God.; so, then, “they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” And most legitimate is the inference. If the wisdom of the flesh be enmity against God, they that are in the flesh therefore, cannot please God. And what an awful thing it is for a man to be in that condition in which he cannot please God! “In his favor is life, and his loving kindness is better than life;” “he hides his face, his creatures are troubled; he sends forth his Spirit, they are created;” “in God we live and move and have our being.”

What a fearful thing, I say, dear brethren, to contemplate, that man should be in such a condition in which he cannot please that God! It is a servant's interest to please his master—it is the courtier's interest to please his king—yet, though it be man's interest to please his God, he cannot do it; it is not, that man *does not* do it, but he *cannot* do it; there is an inability affecting human nature in this matter—not that this extenuates the sinner's guilt;—no, dear brethren, state the case as forcibly as you please, *man necessarily sins*, and this is a truth. But what has necessary sinning come from? Necessary sinning has come from *voluntary* sinning. The voluntary sinner has been our forefather Adam; he, as it were, pulled the trigger, and brought down ruin on all his posterity. He sinned, and we sinned in him, for we were in him, and therefore it was a righteous thing for God to deal with us thus, to make his offence ours. If any of us are staggered at this, I say, look at the analogy of nature: a father sins against the law of nature—a father contracts a disease,—what becomes of his child?—His child is affected by the same. Now, unless you can demonstrate that this latter fact is irreconcilable with the providence of God, you cannot object to the truth I have put before you, that we have fallen in Adam, while at the same time, our God is love.

But to guard against another abuse of this doctrine, many say, on hearing it propounded to them—Oh! if this be the case, “man is not responsible.” But they forget the fact, that *God did not make man as he is*, “God made man upright, but man has sought out to himself many inventions:” God *made* but one man, Adam, and he made him holy, and Adam had the ability of not sinning, if he would; but he sinned, and we, the rest of the species, have been *propagated* from Adam after he fell. I say, *we are not as God made us*; God made us in Adam, and made us holy; but we

are unholy, essentially different from what God made us—therefore, our condition is one in which we *are* responsible.

But, dear brethren, who are they that are in the flesh? To consider our text closely, if you look to Galatians v. 19, 20, you will see. You are all ready, upon this question being asked you, who are in the flesh?—you are all ready to point to the profligate, to those who are not restrained by any law, human or divine; you are all ready to say, those persons are in the flesh—but if you observe this passage that I now refer you to, you will see there are other characters who come under this denomination. “Now, the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft;”—these, you say, are heinous offences, and the man who is obnoxious to them, he is in the flesh, and cannot please God. But the catalogue does not stop here; the Apostle proceeds, “hatred,” and does not hatred reign in many a heart where there is outward decency? “variance,” and is not variance found in the civility, accomplishments and elegance of even refined life? and again, “emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings,” but I need go no farther—you see what a large class the text contemplates in speaking of those in the flesh.

But there is an explanation given of this, immediately in connexion with the passage before us, Rom. viii. 9. “but ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.” Who are they that are not in the flesh? they, says the Apostle, that have the Spirit of God dwelling in them: and the converse holds equally true, that they who have not the Spirit of God dwelling in them *are* in the flesh; that is, all who are in their natural state, who are in the state merely in which they have been born, they are, in scriptural language, to be characterized “as in the flesh,” and, therefore, they “cannot please God.”

Now, let us see how this statement

holds true, that they cannot please God. In the *first* place, they cannot please him, inasmuch as *they have no motive operating on them to make them desire to please him*. The carnal man, the natural man, he has no love for God. Do you ask for a proof of this,—I take an obvious one, how do you speak of the service of God? Dear brethren, if there be any here who are not converted to God, I ask you, do you not call it your *duty*? Is not this the word that is common with you in speaking of religion? at one time “you attend to the *duties* of religion,” at another “you are unmindful of your *duty*.” Ah, my brethren, does love speak of its indulgence *as a duty*? Oh, no; love makes the service perfect freedom. Look at Jacob. Jacob loved Rachel, and served seven years in order that he might receive her as his wife, and he found these seven years, though they were years of severe toil—in the day time he endured the heat, and in the night time the cold—he found them but as so many days. *He loved Rachel*—there was the secret. I say, then, the natural man, being without love to God, has not the motive to enable him to please God. He looks on God as a task master, as an austere person; he would get over the duty, whatever it is, as rapidly as possible, and be done with it, and he disrelishes any thing that would bring him into contact with God: so, then, “they that are in the flesh cannot please God.”

2dly. In the way of *success*, the proposition holds good. The natural man cannot succeed in pleasing God. Let him have ever such motives operating on him, being a natural man he cannot succeed; for in whom is God well pleased? God himself answers, “this is my beloved Son *in whom* I am well pleased.” God’s eye of complacency, beloved, rests only on Jesus and that which stands related to Jesus; and the natural man, being out of Jesus, not being united to him, cannot please God: do what he may, exert

himself as he may, God cannot be pleased with him, for he is out of Christ, and God's eye of disapprobation rests on him in every thing he does ;—instead of being accepted of God, every act of the unconverted man is a sin before God. It is necessary to state these things broadly and plainly—they can be proved, and therefore stagger not at the reception of them. I say again, every thing the natural man does, whether he eats or drinks or whatever he does, is sinful before God. Take an illustration : there is a bowl—you give motion to it—the bowl has no motion except what it gets from you, but the particular bias that it has, causes it to curve, to turn aside from the course in which you propelled it. In one respect the bowl pleases you, for it moves ; but then in its motion, every yard of ground it covers, it is opposed to you. Now thus it is with the sinner, with the natural man. In that he lives and performs natural actions, he pleases God, for every faculty and power he has is from God. But *how* does he live—*how* does he employ his faculties and powers?—alas ! he is contrary to God in every thing ; the evil bias in his nature, like the unevenness of the bowl, receives the impulse of God's benevolent hand, only to pervert it. Therefore, I say, the natural man cannot please God, but is opposed to him in every action of his life. And, dear brethren, I am glad to be able to bring forward the sober testimony of our Church to the scripturalness of this statement. What does the article of our Church say—the 13th Article—“ Works done before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ.” Our Church echoes the language of the text, “ they that are in the flesh cannot please God ;” do as they may, as long as they are in the flesh, they *cannot* please God. And, brethren, can I address my own congregation—can I address any strangers that may have come among us on this occa-

sion—without pressing on them the importance of this truth, that, out of Christ, God is not pleased with us ; that there is a relationship between him and us, necessary, absolutely necessary, before his eye can rest on us with any approbation. But, beloved, I should not forget to add, this relationship may be entered into, and faith is the means of entering into it ; he that believeth becomes one with Christ, and therefore he is regarded, not as he is in himself, but as he is in Christ, his head ; just as if you were looking to recognise a person, you would confine your attention to the head—it is his head you behold ;—so God, in looking at his Church, beholds only Christ, and he sees his Church united to Christ, members of his body : this is the reason why God can look with delight and pleasure on his people ; for “ who can say, that he has made his heart clean ?” “ if any man says he has no sin, he deceives himself, and the truth is not in him.” How is it, then, that God can look on such creatures, can love them, can rest on them with love—rejoice over them with singing?—only because of their relationship to Christ, he sees them, not in themselves, but as they are in Christ. I say, then, beloved brethren, hasten to get into this relationship ; let no other object divert your thoughts from this. You may have the applause of men, a good reputation—but, oh, if the secret of your character be, that you are not united to Christ by a living faith, what will the breath of applause or earthly reputation avail you in that day when God will judge the secrets of all men by Jesus Christ ? Beloved brethren, suffer the word of exhortation ; and if there be any of you whose consciences tell you that though you call yourselves religious, and engage in religious duties, yet that Christ does not dwell in your hearts by faith, Oh ! my brethren, embrace Christ, and embrace him now ; embrace his “ great salvation ;” he has died—he has risen again, that he might be the Lord both of



the dead and living; and the word of God has said, that every knee *shall* bow to him, and every tongue confess his name. Yield up yourselves, then, to Jesus, and henceforth live to him;—thus you will have the smile of a gracious Father resting on you continually.

But now, beloved brethren, I would come to the application of this subject to the case before us this day, that of education. We have seen what the material is on which education is to work. The material is very bad. We have seen that it has no native excellence in it; on the other hand, that it is corrupt to the very core. We have seen this to be the state of human nature, that it is enmity against God, and that “they who are merely in a state of nature cannot please God.” What sort of education, then, should we seek to give to this nature, under these circumstances? Is it a literary education? Oh! dear brethren, what will a literary education do? It will spread manure over the soil; it will give power, it will give knowledge, which is power, to an individual; but the bias of his heart being alienated from his God, how will that power be exercised? it will be exercised against God, and being exercised against God, it cannot be looked on as likely to be exercised *for* his neighbour; for he that loveth not God, cannot love his neighbour.

Let us take the case of a ship riding before the wind: some of her sails are hoisted, and breakers are ahead. The proposal is made to hoist more sails, and there is no accompanying proposal to the effect that the helm should be adjusted. What would you say to such a proposal? Would you not say that it was diabolical, that when the ship is turned to the breakers, that the power of sail should be increased, and yet the *rudder* not turned! Now, man—the natural man—is that ship. He has certain resources as a creature; he is born with these resources; but what is ahead of him?—*perdition*, my brethren, perdition is before every

natural man; and the tendency of every natural man, looking at him in himself, is towards hell. Well, what are we to say to him who would increase the resources of man—who would crowd fresh sail on him, and not turn the rudder of his heart? Is it not more diabolical than the conduct of the man who would advise concerning the ship I have alluded to? Is it not as much more diabolical, the making this proposition, as eternity is of more awful moment than time? It cannot, then, need proof, that a mere literary education will not suffice for human nature as it is, to be of any service.

Well, dear friends, will a *moral* education answer? I ask, what are mere morals? a habit of respect and reverence to the prevailing opinion of the day—morals, separated from the only root of them—the love of God—they are but as flowers strewn over a dead corpse. And is this what we are to do with human nature; just to hide the process of spiritual dissolution which is going on within by a veil of morals, to get a man formally to abstain from some things and engage in other things; and to be satisfied with this, while we leave the core of the evil untouched? Why, my brethren, morals separated from religion, are only just what their name implies,—*usages*: they are ever varying—separate them from religion, and they have no stability—the breath of man changes them; what prevails in this generation will not prevail the next; and what prevails in that generation may not prevail with the succeeding one. Among the Spartans, he who committed theft with the most secrecy and success was the most accomplished,—such was their morals. There is no morality separate from religion—

Talk they of morals? Oh thou Bleeding Lamb,  
Thou Teacher of new morals to mankind,  
The grand morality is love of thee.

Yes, the love of Christ it is which is the root of morality, and without the love of

Christ planted in the soul, there is nothing which is to be depended on—nothing which will not ultimately show its spuriousness.

Again, if a mere literary education suffice not to meet the exigencies of human nature ; or if a moral education will not suffice, perhaps a religious education *after a general manner*, will ; that is, an education that will not go into the subject of religion *minutely*, that will teach some common points that all admit, but will go no farther—perhaps this may suffice. Now, beloved brethren, this is the rampant evil we have to contend with in our day. There is a large class of men, christian professors, who favor such an education as this. They say, “ let us give the people a religious education as to generals—let the nation give such an education to her subjects—and not go farther ;—if there be any thing defective in *that* education—any thing further to be taught on the subject of religion—let it be imparted privately by their own teachers ; but this education, connected with religion after a general way, will amply suffice for the amelioration of the condition of society.”

Now, beloved friends, I cannot be faithful to my God in alluding to this system, without testifying against it. I would not testify against it by mere declamation ; I would call on you to exercise your minds as to the tendency of this—yea, more—as to the principle—the abstract principle on which such an education must rest. It has been introduced lately into England, and alas, it has been many years in existence in our own country. I say then, men and brethren, look to the principle, and attend to the principle on which this education rests. It is this ; *that in order to extend religion, the comprehension of religion may be diminished* ; that is, in order to make religious education prevalent, we may divest it of all peculiarity, and make it to consist of generals. This is the principle, I repeat, upon which the sys-

tem is founded—that the extension of religion may be effected by diminishing the comprehension. Men have looked over this country and observed the mass of the people alienated from the established scriptural education that was being given to them, and they have said to themselves, it is very desirable for to get a religious education among these people, but we will not succeed in our design if we do not take something out of that religious education that has been given to the people heretofore ; the use of the whole Bible has been “ a vital defect ;” we will therefore compile a religious education of our own—we will take away from the word of God those portions which are obnoxious to various classes of individuals, and in order to do this, we will have the representatives of Socinians on the one hand, and representatives of Roman Catholics on the other hand, sitting over the Bible, and whatever they object to we will not let go into the religious book to be used for the education of the children. I say, dear brethren, this is *the principle*—this is the ground of the constitution of the National Board of Education that sits from time to time in this land. The design is for to make this sort of general religious education prevalent at the expense of certain truths in God’s blessed word. If the whole Bible goes among the people, then, say they—the religious part of the education will not be popular ; therefore, religious truths not palatable to all, must be excluded ; and accordingly, volatilizing, so to speak, the word of the living God under the exhausting process, that a Papist and Socinian Commissioner puts it through : the “ residuum” that is left, goes into the book of extracts, and only this is used in the religious education of the rising generation.

Now, principles are important things to attend to, because they can be acted on in various ways ; and, dear brethren, how may this principle be acted on ?—Let us withdraw our attention from the

contemplation of children, and let us fix it for a moment on the adult inhabitants of the country. Is there not as much division among the adults of this nation as among the children? is there not as much division among adults on the subject of religious worship, as among the children on the subject of education? and if it be competent on the one hand for men in authority—for men wielding the resources of the nation, in order to effect their object of the united education of the children, to waive all peculiar dogmas; surely, they may claim competency on the other hand, to abolish all national sanction of peculiar formularies and places of worship—substituting for it the patronage of a general creed—which would comprise the common tenets of all; and what would this lead to as regards the adult population? Why, it would lead, amongst other things, to our holy and beautiful house of prayer, perhaps being enlarged—and occupied by worshippers of all kinds—addressing the Deity after a general form—a form that would have expunged from it every thing peculiar; and that would embrace only that which was common to all—it would turn the churches of our land, my brethren, into so many *pantheons*, where every man would come for to worship his God! I may have expressed myself indifferently, but I believe the argument to be incontrovertable, if the principle of National Education be acted out in reference to adults: the established churches, such as we have, in which God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are worshipped: the established churches, in which Jesus is held up as the only Saviour, will be converted into places of worship in which all men may mingle together—joining in those things they admit—and reserving their peculiar tenets for their private devotion.

And is it only this latitudinarianism it would lead to? Nay, brethren, it would lead further. Suppose, that Deists became numerous in our land, and suppose

that they said, “we will not join in any worship that recognises God’s revealed word,” what would be necessary to be done in order to make religious worship national on this principle; what but that—that which is a peculiarity of others should be abolished—and that the word of God should be voted null and void; and that publicly we should only adore God as the Supreme Being—the Creator.

And is that all? Yea, the principle would go farther. There are Atheists, as I have been telling you, in England, and their number increasing. Now, suppose these Atheists would not come to any worship in which the existence of the Supreme Being was recognized,—what would be necessary to be done in order to have, I say, a religion embracing the whole country, and to have none paying for that which they conscientiously object to, for this also is urged: why, it would be necessary that the acknowledgment of the existence of God himself should be compromised!! and it should not be a hard thing to effect this: there would be only one solitary article to be thrown overboard;—and ought the maintenance of one solitary truth be adhered to, in competition with the pleasing of perhaps thousands of our fellow-men? I say, if we let the principle I have been speaking of, and which is the ground work of the constitution of the National Board of Education in this country, proceed without protesting against it, we cannot complain if we are deluged with these nefarious views and developments of impiety which I have been pointing out.

What is the religious education, then, which is necessary, and which will only serve the end in view, of bettering our fellow-countrymen? *The education that will bring them to Jesus*—the education that will lead them to the knowledge of Jesus as a *divine Saviour*, on the one hand—contrary to the Socinians; and to the knowledge of Jesus as an *all-sufficient Saviour*, on the other hand—contrary to Papists. And if we stop short of



this, in our education of the rising generation, then we leave them, after all we may confer on them, in that state in which the word of God says, that "they cannot please God;" I say, if we stop short, and do not seek to bring the children of this country to the knowledge of Jesus as a divine Saviour, and an *all-sufficient* Saviour: that is, in other words, educating them in a full knowledge of the truth, we leave them in a state in which they cannot please God. And ought we to be content, dear brethren, to act in this way?—ought the nation to be content? The nation has a conscience as well as an individual—and will not the nation be fearfully responsible before God, which says, we will give such an education that will leave the people in the flesh, that will leave them in their carnal enmity against God? Will not the nation be fearfully responsible that acts thus? I admit, there is a difficulty to be met, in the aversion of the people of this country to scriptural education—though I must say, such aversion has been fostered by the conduct our government has pursued. But supposing this difficulty to exist in all its magnitude, are we to be diverted from the straight path of principle and duty? It is our's to give a scriptural education, whether the people receive it or not; yea, it is our's to continue offering it to the end, notwithstanding all their disaffection to it, looking for the Lord in his own time to make it acceptable. How should a Christian parent act with his child, if he came and said to him,—Father, I am content to learn from you the arts and sciences which you teach me, but I don't want, nor am I willing to receive, the scriptural instruction which you mix with it. Why it is plain the parent's answer should be,—my child, though you may not relish the religious truth I impart to you in connexion with literary knowledge, yet it is my duty not to give you the one without the other,—you may not

pay attention to both, only caring for one, but it is my duty to impart to you both;—your sin does not release me from my obligation. In a similar way, then I say, should a christian state act towards her subjects, her deluded subjects, as the Roman Catholics of this country are, she should establish scriptural schools for the young, and proclaim throughout the length and breadth of the land, that all are welcome to enter and acquire useful knowledge; but that it must be in strict union *pari passu*, with instruction in religion, that the people may be indifferent on this subject; but still this does not absolve the state from the responsibility.

But now, dear brethren, to conclude, we should feel deeply for the want of principle that the nation has shown in this matter,—we should deprecate it continually, and be humbled before God, for that such a course is being persisted in, and the more humbled, because of the blindness and security, characterizing those that ought to feel it most.

But should we stop here? No, my beloved, we should seek to give an antidote to the bane as far as possible.—Since there is such a latitudinarian education established in this country, we should diffuse a *scriptural* education, and it is in connection with the promotion of scriptural education—real, scriptural education—an education in which, not merely the generals of religion are taught, but the important truths of the Bible—every one of them—that you are assembled here this day. And, dear brethren, I do feel jealous that you should act worthy of your principles; that, when these principles are being called in question, you should not merely with your lips, but with your resources, testify to the value you set upon them.

And you, my brethren, who compose this congregation, you are more especially called on to act thus. You lately, at my suggestion, signed your names to resolutions, one of which was to this effect,



that if scriptural education was required more extensively in this parish and neighbourhood, you were ready cheerfully to come forward and engage in extending such scriptural education. You have put your hand and seal, as it were, to this, and I say, it more imperatively rests on you to be liberal at this time.

As to our schools, I cannot say much of them, not having been very long here ; and their progress having been somewhat interrupted by a change of teachers ; but it will suffice to state, there are upwards of 200 children on the roll of our schools, and many of them are Roman Catholics. Moreover, dear brethren, if we would have our schools attended to, and especially in competition with other schools that are being introduced among us, we must make the instruction in our schools as efficient as possible. Counting on your co-operation, in engaging teachers competent to their work, I have not hesitated to stipulate with them liberally ;

I expect, therefore, your more than ordinary help on the occasion.

I will not press the thing farther, it is unnecessary. I reflect that the Lord has gifted you with means—and that he has gifted you with better than means—a willing heart to use them in his service,—that according to your measure,—yea, above your measure,—(some of you)—have lent yourselves to the service of the Lord. I would only say, then, be thankful, brethren to God for having put it into your hearts to serve him ;—it is blessed to receive ; “ it is more blessed to give.” He who knew what it was to give, he has affirmed it ; for “ He loved us and gave himself for us.”

May this blessedness, I pray, be realized more and more among us all ; and may we show to all who take knowledge of us, that we are anxious, that the blessing of scriptural education may be disseminated through the land.—Amen.

THE DANGER OF SELF-DECEPTION.

## A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE EPISCOPAL CHAPEL, UP. BAGGOT-ST, DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER, 29, 1839,

BY THE REV. HAMILTON VERSCHOYLE, A.M.

CHAPLAIN.

GALATIANS, vi. 3.

“If a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.”

AMONG merchants, there is a system of mutual accommodation. Men engaged in trade are liable to reverses—they experience disappointments and losses, and hence they are often cast on the friendly assistance of their more prosperous fellows.

Christians, dear brethren, are spiritual merchantmen—they are subject to many changes—they have their castings down, as well as their liftings up; they often fail, and hence they require to have that love which “beareth all things,” exercised towards them; hence the rule laid down in the 2nd verse, “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.” It was a wise and a good saying of a certain man of God, when he heard of the grievous fall of a brother, “he fell yesterday, and I may fall to-day.” But if a man imagine that he is lifted up out of the reach of these reverses—if he think that his mountain stands so strong, that he does not require the forbearance of his brethren, and therefore, that he himself need show no forbearance towards others, you have a description of that man in

the text, “if a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.” This is the connexion of the text, with what goes before.

Self-deception, my dear brethren, is very extensively practised. Every man is a dupe of it, who has not been taught by the Spirit of God to know himself. We know well that all men are very watchful against impostors, and are very indignant if others practice deceit on them. What folly would it be, if we would passively submit to be deceived by ourselves; and the more so, because if others deceive us, this for the most part affects only our temporal interests, but if we deceive ourselves our souls are ruined—ruined for ever.

Now, while we are preaching, and while you are hearing, oh! let us remember, that “if any man thing himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself;”—let me remember that I am nothing, and therefore that, without God’s Holy Spirit helping me and working with me, I can say nothing to your profit, in the way of detecting

and exposing the impositions we are apt to practice on ourselves; and remember also, dear brethren, that you are nothing—that you can receive no profit—that you can understand nothing to any purpose—that you can lay nothing to heart, so as really to have your souls benefited, without the continual operation of God's Holy Spirit, who worketh all in all.

We deceive ourselves then, because we are in the habit of using false weights—false balances—false measures in judging of ourselves: and thus, a man often comes to the conclusion, that he is something, when in truth he is nothing. Now, let us stop for a moment to enquire the meaning of that word in its connexion—nothing. What is meant when a man is said to be nothing? For an explanation we look to the 1st epistle to the Corinthians, viii. 4, “As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one.” There, an idol is said to be nothing. But an idol, in a certain sense, is something—it is wood or stone, or gold or silver; but it is nothing to the purpose for which it is used—nothing to the man who worships it—it does him no good, and in that sense it is nothing. Man, indeed, may be something; he may be, in the common sense of the word, good—a good citizen—a good father—a good master; he may have worldly substance, intellect, learning, and yet he may be nothing as regards the kingdom of God—he may have no interest in, or fitness for the glorious and eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and then, in the Scripture sense, he is nothing, whatever he thinks of himself.

Having offered this explanation of the word nothing, let us seek, with God's help, to detect and expose some of the methods by which men impose on themselves. The first we shall observe on is this: men deceive themselves by com-

paring themselves with their fellows. Now, this, St. Paul testifies to be a foolish thing, 2nd Corinthians x. 12, “We dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves; but they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves amongst themselves are not wise.” What does their folly consist in? They look abroad into the world, which lies in wickedness, and see the vices of men—they see murder, drunkenness, uncleanness, envy, strife, railing, sabbath-breaking, and all other prevailing abominations; and then they come home to themselves and say, “thank God, I am not as other men,” I am no gross sinner—no extortioner—no drunkard—nor unclean person; and then they congratulate themselves, because the comparison issues in their own favour. But is that any evidence that they are right with God? The thief may say, thank God, I am not a murderer, but is he the less amenable to the law? A man in fever may say, thank God, I have not the plague, and yet is he less in danger? And thus, I say, men may be comparing themselves with others who are more openly vicious than themselves, and come to the conclusion that it is all right with them; but can any reasonable man say, that this is a safe standard, or a safe measure? A dim sighted man, if he be in the midst of persons perfectly blind, may suppose himself to be very discerning, but this is no test of his quick sightedness. Oh! dear brethren, be not deceived, do not be satisfied with measuring yourselves by the standard of man, but come home to the standard of God—come and examine yourselves in the light of truth.

II. Another way, by which men impose on themselves is by comparing themselves with what they once were. You were once a swearer, you have given up the habit—you were once a drunkard, but now you totally abstain—you were once a sabbath-breaker, now,

you no longer work your horses or servants on the Lord's day unnecessarily ; you once totally neglected the bible and prayer, now you are in the habit of reading it daily, and of daily being on your knees, and this satisfies you—you are better than you once were, and you conclude that it is well with you, Oh ! you may be awfully deceived. You may be another man—quite a different person—and yet not a new creature in Christ Jesus, and unless you are a new creature in Christ Jesus, you are as entirely under condemnation and the wrath of God as you were in the days when you were openly profane ; your case is like that person in consumption who sometimes feels that he has made a rally, and thinks he is getting well, when his disease is still consuming his vitals. Sin unpardoned, and sin unmortified, is destroying your poor soul, while there is an outward amendment, your state is most dangerous, the more dangerous because you are less likely to be aroused to a sense of your danger : you deceive yourselves—Oh ! may God undeceive you.

Another false measure or balance by which men deceive themselves is the estimation they are held in by others. I do not mean to say that a good name is to be despised ; the Scripture tells us that it is “ better than precious ointment ;” that is, when a man has a good reputation, it sheds a sweeter savour around him than precious ointment ; and so important is it, that Saint Paul tells us that a man is not to be employed as a Minister in the Church of God unless he has a good report among those that are without. But then it is possible for him to be well reported of by others while a heavy woe may be hanging over his head, “ Woe to you when all men shall speak well of you.” Therefore, he should not be satisfied with the good opinion of others, he should take care to be like Demetrius—3d Epistle of John, 12—“ Demetrius hath good report of all men, and of the truth itself.” He is well

reported of, not by man only, but by God ; if man has signed him, God has countersigned him ; and unless God countersign our state, character, and name, my dear brethren, we will never pass in the judgment. We are warned sufficiently against this delusion in Psalm xlix. 18, where the Psalmist is describing the man who has deceived himself by his own estimate of himself, and by the estimate that others formed of him—“ Whilst he lived he blessed his soul, and men will praise thee when thou dost well to thyself.” But what follows ? “ He shall go to the generation of his fathers ; they shall never see light,”—his wicked fathers who died in sin. The man who basked in the sunshine of his own approbation, and of all around him, as soon as he dies, goes down to the blackness of darkness for ever. He is perhaps still praised where he is not, he is tormented where he is. What an awful fall is this !—and this is the result of a man measuring himself by his own standard, and the standard of others, instead of the standard of the sanctuary.

Lastly—Men weigh themselves in false balances when they weigh themselves not by the spirit, but by the letter of God's law. This was the balance in which the rich young ruler, whom we read of in the Gospel of St. Mark weighed himself. (x. 17.) He came to Jesus and asked, “ Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life ? and Jesus said unto him, why callest thou me good ? there is none good but one, that is God. Thou knowest the commandments, do not commit adultery, do not kill, do not steal, do not bear false witness, defraud not, honour thy father and mother. And he answered and said unto him, all these have I observed from my youth.” The man weighed himself in the balance of the letter of the law ; and yet this man came short ; being weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, he was found wanting. One thing he lacked, and that was the one thing needful, with-



out which he could not enter into life ; he had no real faith, no real love. Now, it is thought by some, that this young ruler was no other than Saul of Tarsus. However this may be, we know that Saul of Tarsus was precisely in the same state of mind before his conversion. He tells us in Romans, vii. 9.—(it is a remarkable verse)—“ I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came sin revived, and I died.” That seems strange. How could Paul be without the law ? Surely he was under the law, and surely he knew the law ; he was a man acquainted with the Scriptures, and yet he says he was alive without the law ! Why does he speak so ? Because, my dear brethren, the mere letter of the law without the spirit, is not the law. If the dead body of a man is brought into a house, you do not say the man is come into the house ; the spirit is gone, and there is nothing but the body ; you do not say the man is there ; and so Paul carried the letter of the law written on his phylacteries, and yet the law was not there ; but he said when the living commandment came, the commandment in the spirit, then sin revived, I was “ weighed in the balances and found wanting.” When he discovered the law was spiritual, then he says “ I am carnal ;” the moment you discover that the law is spiritual, you cry out “ I am carnal, sold under sin,” I that was comely in my own eyes, now I am black when I view myself in the glass of God’s holy law. This is the right standard.

But to bring this standard before you more distinctly, I would say, that the example of the Lord Jesus Christ is a personification and full expression of all the holiness of the spiritual law of God : and perhaps there is no way in which we can discover our own utter short coming more fully, than when we look at ourselves in the light of the example of our blessed Saviour. We might, by the means of the rules of art discover the defects of a painting, but if we could set a

perfect painting beside it, this would discover the defects of the picture still more distinctly. Now, if you set that perfect Lord Jesus Christ by your side, you see what a vile wretch you are—what a thing of nought you are, when you look at him who is clothed with righteousness from head to foot—who is adorned with all the beautiful ornaments of the grace of the Holy Ghost, Oh ! then you see how short you come in every respect ; you will no longer appear anything in your own eyes.

But, what wondrous grace is here, that while the spotless purity of the Lord Jesus condemns us, at the same time we see something in him to justify us freely from all our offences, and make us rejoice in his perfect righteousness, for it is written of him 1st John v.—“ This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ, not by water only,” water, emblematical of his spotless purity, “ but with water and blood ;” he came with blood, he is not only white but ruddy, and this blood speaks pardon and peace to every believing soul, so that the very holy example which condemns the sinner, as soon as it is apprehended by faith, is seen to be a means of justification ; for it was by this holiness that Jesus was the Lamb without blemish and without spot, and without that spotless purity he could not have made a full satisfaction for sin.

But yet, my dear brethren, even after God has taught us by his Holy Spirit to renounce our own righteousness altogether, and to cleave unto the righteousness of Christ, even after we have been convicted by God’s holy and spiritual law of our total depravity and corruption, and inability to present to God any righteousness of our own, even after we have closed with the offer of the Gospel, and received adoption into the family of God and been made his dear children—I say, after we have gone on by the grace of God to do some duties in his service, and to mortify some of these evils that dwell

in our evil hearts, even then this self-deception pursues us, and if we are not on the watch, we shall be deceived again to think ourselves something when we are nothing. Against this device of Satan our Lord warns and guards us in St. Luke xvii. 10, "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do." Our Lord and Master has never gained any thing by our services—we have never made him our debtor. But when we have gained some victory over our spiritual enemies, and have been employed a little in his service, we begin to imagine that we have some strength and goodness of our own, Oh! how sadly do we there deceive ourselves. There is nothing that detects this spirit so much as that very thing we were speaking of in the commencement; when we see an unfruitful or fallen brother, we are ready to take up stones and cast them at him: oh! this discovers the pride and self-sufficiency of our vile hearts;—the right spirit to be in, is that which is beautifully and scripturally expressed in the following verse:

Perhaps for his name,  
 Poor worm as I am,  
 Some works I shall finish with glad loving aim;  
 I then, which is best,  
 Shall at his dear breast,  
 As at the beginning, find pardon and rest.

Oh, this is to come out of self, which should be the continual aim and effort of the child of God while serving his Master, that he may, with St. Paul, "Serve the Lord with all humility of mind."

We would just observe, in conclusion, that these views of himself do not exclude the Christian from the privilege of knowing that he is a child of God. The men of this world, who are something in their own eyes—who are boasting themselves in their own righteousness, would think it the greatest presumption possible for a man to believe, that he is

a child of God. But, do you suppose, that the holy Apostle St. John, that pattern of meekness and humility, was uttering a vain boast with respect to himself and others, when he writes, in his first epistle, iii. 1, 2, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

There is then perfect consistency between man sincerely regarding himself as nothing, and yet knowing assuredly that he is a son of God, an heir of glory, honor, and immortality. Further, a man may be conscious of his integrity in the service of Christ his Master, and yet, all the time, esteem himself nothing; for in 2nd Corinthians i. 12, we find St. Paul declaring, "our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world." Here is no glorying in self, but in the grace of God, who worketh all in all. And farther still, a man may form a sober estimate of the gifts and graces that God has bestowed on him, and yet not look on himself as any thing, as we find the same Apostle in 2nd Corinthians, xii. 11, "For in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing."

Oh! my dear brethren, let us learn this lesson—let us learn it experimentally—let it be engraven on the tables of our hearts—that we are nothing, and that Jesus Christ is all in all. Paul had learned it well when he wrote, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Thus, in the faithful servant of Christ is fulfilled the

word of the prophet, Jer. iv. 2, "Thou shalt swear, the Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness, and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory."

Oh! let me ask you, this day, in whom are you blessing yourselves? Do you feel any satisfaction with yourselves, and with your own attainments? In whom is it that you feel satisfaction? Is it in Jesus?—is it in Christ Jesus that you are glorying? Oh! remember the case referred to in the Psalm: there was a man who blessed his soul without any

regard to a covenant God and Mediator, and the curse of God was upon him all the time, and the curse of God overtook him. But if you are blessing yourselves in the Lord Jesus Christ, you shall be blessed indeed, for God is waiting to bless you—he will increase and multiply blessings on your head—he will bless you with the blessing of heaven above—blessings of the deep that lieth under, with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, and at last will bless you with eternal joy and felicity at his right hand.

"I CANNOT but think, with what unspeakable joy old Simeon died, when, after long waiting for the consolation of Israel, he had now seen the Lord's Christ; when I hear him say, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.'" Methinks I should see his soul ready to fly out of his mouth, in a heavenly ravishment; and even then upon its wing towards its glory; for now his eyes saw, and his arms embraced, in God's salvation his own, in Israel's glory his own. How gladly doth he now see death, when he hath the Lord of Life in his bosom! Or how can he wish to close up his eyes with any other object? Yet, when I have seriously considered it, I cannot see wherein our condition comes short of his. He saw the child Jesus but in his swathing bands, when he was but now entering upon the great work of our redemption; we see him after the full

accomplishment of it, gloriously triumphing in heaven. He saw him buckling on his armour, and entering into his lists: we see him victorious: 'Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this, that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save?' He could only say, 'To us a child is born, to us a son is given;' we can say, 'Thou hast ascended on high; thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men.' It is true, the difference is, he saw his Saviour with bodily eyes, we with mental; but the eyes of our faith are no less sure and unfailing, than those of sense. Lord, why should not I, whose eyes have no less seen thy salvation, say, Now let thy servant depart, not in peace only, but in a joyful sense of my instant glory?"—*Hall's Century of Divine Breathings.*

# THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

## GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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THE FIRE UPON THE ALTAR.

### A SERMON

PREACHED IN DOUGLAS CHURCH, DIOCESE OF CORK AND CLOYNE,

BY THE REV. HENRY HARDY, A.M.

(Curate-Assistant.)

LEVITICUS vi. 12, 13.

“ And the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it ; it shall not be put out : and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt-offering in order upon it ; and he shall burn thereon the fat of the peace-offerings. The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar ; it shall never go out.”

The inspired authorship of the Bible is spread over centuries : it is composed of many portions written at different periods and by different instruments, under the suggestion or superintendence of the one Spirit.

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lime anticipation and triumphant thanksgiving—or associate with Apostles as they pour the light of a new dispensation upon the shadows of the old ; the aim and object, the direction and the tendency of all is *one*.

Conformably with this view of scripture, and consistently with the VIIth article of the church, we are authorized to expect throughout the Bible an inward and all-pervading consistency of purpose on the part of the Most High ; which may be traced, like precious ore, now near the surface—now far below ; but still unbroken though unseen, and ultimately working up to open day in all its sparkling richness ; and thus, in truth, we can observe the vein of gospel mercy (“ more to be desired than much fine gold”) throw up anticipative gleams, and shed some sparkling fragments among the apparently unprofitable elements of early dispensations, proving its existence even then, and giving promise of such hidden treasure of “ life and immortality,” as should one day arise and shine upon a benighted and impoverished world.

Hence the spiritual dispensation under which we are placed can no more be separated from the ritual and prophetic, than the exposition from the text, or the solution from the perplexing riddle ; for *Moses* was but *Christ under the veil*, and the *law* was but *the holiness of the Spirit written upon stones* ; the veil was taken off *Moses* by the prophet like unto *Moses*, and the gospel was discovered underneath ; and, by the coming of the Spirit, the writing on the tables of stone was transferred to the fleshly tables of the heart.

With such acknowledgments of the broad and significant consistency of the

Divine word, let us approach the text ; but before immediately closing with it, let us offer one more remark of a kindred character with the foregoing, in order to clear the way fully towards its elucidation. The laws by which Jehovah bound the Jewish nation to himself were of a threefold nature, and involved a threefold relationship : the *moral law* regarded them as the creatures of His hand, and bound thereby to render Him the service of heart, soul, mind, and strength : the *judicial law* regarded them as subjects in a political capacity, and bound thereby to observe the statutes promulged for the promotion of due allegiance, and the well-being of the nation : the *ceremonial law* regarded them as *transgressors of the two preceding*, and as helpless dependants upon the merciful arrangements of His *grace* ; while the whole economy of the Jewish system, *received as one*, bore witness to the unchanging holiness of God, the existence of sin, and the necessity for some adequate though yet unprovided atonement.

The Levitical dispensation was in the strictest view, a dispensation of *sacrifices*—sacrifices periodically recurring, but yet insufficient to procure that blessing of pardon and peace, for which they were ostensibly provided. The very *nature* of the offering, as well as the fact of its repetition, is itself urged by the Apostle, (Heb. x. 1—4) as an argument for their inadequacy ; and that an insight into this truth was had by the pious and discerning Jew, we can adduce the sentiments of David who, because of his wilful sin, not being even contemplated by those sacrifices, was constrained to confess, “ thou desirest not sacrifice else would I give it thee ; thou delightest not in burnt offering.” Ps. li.

To what purpose then, it may be asked, were they instituted, and in what light are they to be contemplated? They were the monitors of man's sin and God's holiness; they were standing remembrancers of God's gracious purposes in the coming Saviour; they were instruments by which *faith* was fastened on the *anti-type*; was reminded of the *promise* and instructed in the *hope*:—"which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ," for, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," and, "God hath made Him to be the sin-offering for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

The text draws our notice to one altar which symbolically testified to God's uncompromising *justice*, and to his remembrance of the covenant of *grace*.

None of the ministering servants of Jehovah could presume to enter the sanctuary day by day, before supplying with its appointed sacrifice and fuel, the brazen altar in the outer court, on which the fire should be ever kept alive; while the great High Priest himself, in entering once a year into the holiest of all, dared not to set his foot within the vail without *blood* from the sin-offering, *fire* from "the altar before the Lord," and *incense* beaten small; that whilst the *blood* was being sprinkled before the mercy seat, the *incense* cast upon the coals of fire might rise in cloudy folds, and hide his imperfections before the mystic presence of his God. *Two altars* there were, on which fire was perpetually burning, the altar of incense in the holy place, and the altar of burnt offering in the outer court; both, by their unextinguished flame proving their own inadequacy towards furnishing that expiation and

righteousness which go to constitute complete justification, but both also unitedly acting as an index to "Him who hath loved us, and given himself for us an *offering* and a *sacrifice* to God, for a sweet-smelling savour."

Now, in reference to the fire upon the brazen altar, the text speaks in the way of *caution* and also of *assurance*; the caution being thus expressed—"and the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it, it shall not be put out:"—the assurance—"the fire shall ever be burning upon the altar, it shall *never* go out." That fire was kindled from heaven, and so jealous was Jehovah of its preservation as a *type*, that when Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, offered "*strange fire*," "there went out a fire from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord,"

The term "fire" in scripture language, is commonly employed to express the judgment of God upon sin, thus Heb. xii. 29, Ps. l. 2, Thess. 1, &c.; and accordingly, when the Jewish worshipper (the veil being off his heart) contemplated that altar's heaven kindled flame, and bore in mind the divine edict for its preservation, he was given to understand that the judgment of God was held in abeyance, that the divine arrangements for turning aside that judgment from the contrite sinner though revealed to hope, were not consummated in fact, and, that as the fire, day by day, swallowed victim after victim, and burned still as fierce as ever, *that victim* had not yet been laid thereon, whose blood should quench in *mercy* the fire maintained in *justice*.

Well—"God is the Lord who hath shewed us light; bind the *sacrifice* with cords, even to the horns of *the altar*"—the victim has been found and accepted;

"He was led as a sheep to the slaughter;" his blood is "shed for many for the remission of sins," and the *fire is gone out*—God himself hath "put it out:" "for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," and, "through the offering of the body of Christ once for all," mercy and truth, righteousness and peace have met together, and like the wings of the mystic cherubim, they shadow the mercy-seat of God—the throne of divine grace.

"He was delivered (says Scripture) for our offences, and raised for our justification." By the resurrection of Christ from the dead, his subsequent ascension, and his intercession at the right hand of the Majesty on high, the *Father* proclaimed the all-meritorious sufficiency of Jesus his Son our Lord, as the "one mediator between God and man;" while the Holy Ghost, one in love, in mind, and in essence with the Father and the Son, carries out in application to the souls of men the *righteousness and sufferings* of the latter, that they may be justified, sanctified, and glorified. "There is therefore, now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus;" no judgment is recorded against *them*—the bond is cancelled, for, "blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, He took it out of the way, nailing it to—or rather *transfixing it by* the cross," after the ancient method of cancelling a bond, by driving a nail through it. Moreover, the quenching of "the fire" by God's own act, is but the Old Testament form of expressing the dying words of the Great Victim, who in yielding up his Spirit into his Father's hand cried "it is finished!"

"Finished our righteousness and peace,  
Finished our pardon and release,  
The mighty debt is paid;  
By virtue of atoning blood,  
Our sins against the holy God,  
Are in oblivion laid  
While Jesus' dying words we hear,  
Blind unbelief or doubting fear  
Have nothing to reply;  
Wherever their objections fall,  
'Tis finished" still may answer all,  
And silence every cry."

"There is therefore, now, no *condemnation* to them who are in Christ Jesus;" the very *name* of the sacrifice bespeaks our full acquittal; "his name is *Jesus*"—a name appropriated to him because he saves his people from their sins; a name that falls upon the condemned sinner's ear like the reprieve of heaven; a name that pledges Him to the removal not only of the judgment of the Law upon our sin, but also of the power of sin upon our heart. His name is *Christ*, the anointed prophet, priest and king; as prophet, having all wisdom to guide; as prophet, all-sufficient sacrifice to plead; and as king, all power to enthrone himself upon our affections. As *Christ*, he stands the channel of immeasurable blessing to all who put their trust in him; "*like the precious ointment* upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even *Aaron's beard*, that went down to the *skirts of his garments*," the Spirit of grace which anointed Him above measure, by Him descends upon us, the members of his body, and "of his fullness have we all received, and grace for grace."

Well, dear brethren, the *fire is "gone out"*—God himself hath "*put it out*," but in so doing, *he hath kindled another*.

The overflowings of the blood of the Lamb, have indeed extinguished one flame, but the *sprinkling* of that blood has lit up another: That temple has not

"one stone left upon another," the very foundation has been upturned by the plough of the Heathen; but God by his Spirit, has provided materials for the erection of another lasting edifice for the in-dwelling of his glory; that altar is dashed to fragments, but a better has been substituted; that priesthood has been scattered like the relics of a mighty shipwreck, but a more spiritual priesthood is being collected. (1 Peter ii, 5.) Accordingly, when the fire of divine justice died away in the offering up of Christ, the flame of divine love shot upwards upon the altar-hearts of the Lord's redeemed; it was and is *kindled from above*, for love begets love, and, "we love him, because he first loved us." This is the heavenly fire which kindles upon the altar of the heart, the sacrifice of the affections; it is the fruit of satisfied justice; it is the movement of divine mercy, besprinkling the soul with the all-awakening, all-cleansing blood of Jesus, producing a responsive movement of the soul to God, by the drawings of the Spirit of grace, and lighting up a flame in its divinely occupied recesses, not to be extinguished by the deepest waters of trial. Now the language of the text comes into force here as in the former case; and the caution delivered in respect of the *Old Testament* fire, holds good when we transmit it to the *New*. How then is that caution expressed under the bright and spiritual dispensation of which we are the subjects? Thus, "*quench not the Spirit*:" "*grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption*"—"Take heed unto yourselves"—"*Be sober, be vigilant*"—"Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"—and, "ye beloved, building up

yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, *keep yourselves* in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Thus, the solemn precept of the Old Law is by the Spirit of God transcribed upon the pages of the New; and, coupled with this caution, will be found also the assurance of the text:—thus, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, *for it is God which worketh in you*, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." "He will keep the feet of his saints"—"My sheep," says the Saviour, "*shall never perish*, neither shall any pluck them but of my hands"—"The water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life"—"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ"—"All my fresh springs are in thee," &c. &c. Thus does the assurance of the text afford itself for the comfort and sanctification of the children of the Lord.

"*It shall never go out.*" In time of trial and affliction it shall not go out; for, "in the time of trouble He shall hide me in his pavillion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me: He shall set me up upon a rock; and now shall my head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me; therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy: I will sing praises unto the Lord." In seasons of *spiritual depression*, it shall not go out; "Oh my God, my soul is cast down within me, . . . deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts; all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me; yet the Lord will command his loving-kindness in the day-time, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life."



In the *hour of temptation* it shall not go out ; “ for God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able ; but will, with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” Again—“ The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom.” And again—“ I will bring the blind by a way that they know not, I will lead them in paths they have not known : I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight : these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.” When *life too is waning*, and the *night of death* is setting in, and the blighting chill is paralyzing the frame as it enters the deep and dark river, it shall not go out ; for, “ *love is strong as death* ;” and “ many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.”—“ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for thou art with me ; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” Hence, dear brethren, the smile, the radiance, the holy exultation, the happy triumph which lights up the wasted features ; and the parting soul, recognising in the convulsions of its tabernacle, *the shaking of its prison doors*, longs even through death to make its way to Christ ; and poised upon the wings of faith and love, and hovering between two worlds, prepares for the signal of flight, obeys the summons with joy, and soars into the regions of rest—the home of everlasting peace.

But oh ! when *eternity* dawns upon the soul, then—even then too—“ the fire shall ever be burning upon the altar ; it shall never go out !” When much of the distinctive character of faith and hope shall be done away ; *love* shall retain its

character and its pre-eminence. When faith and hope shall lose themselves in sight and enjoyment, love shall rise to the level of its uncreated source. The apostle’s eye was upon *eternal* things, when he said of love, “ *it never faileth* ;” and surely if love be the fruit of faith, and faith be fed by knowledge—and knowledge be eternally progressive in the realms of glory—love shall burn brighter and brighter throughout the days of heaven. The more we discover, the more shall we adore : the more plentiful the *fuel*, the higher and brighter the *flame*. As fast as obscure things are made plain, difficulties solved, and apparent contradictions reconciled—as we learn more and more of the gracious character and mind of God—as we dwell with spiritualized vision and thought, upon the sorrows, the conflicts and the triumphs of the Lamb ; fresh bursts of praise shall swell the harmonies of heaven, and the flame shall shoot higher upon the altar-hearts of the Lord’s redeemed ; every new disclosure adding new undulations to the many-sounding chorusses—new peals to the thunders of thanksgiving. Thus the fire which could but struggle for existence in the ungenial and heavy atmosphere of this world of sin and sorrow, shall be fed and cherished by the very atmosphere of our eternal dwelling-place. “ They shall go from strength to strength.” Knowledge, love, holiness and joy for ever on the increase ; for “ the fire shall ever be burning on the altar, it shall *never* go out.”

What thankfulness of heart, what carefulness of life should not be drawn from the *assurance* and the *caution* thus conveyed ! One, exhorting us to be “ sober and vigilant, for our adversary the devil,

goeth about seeking whom he may devour :” the other, bidding us to “ cast all our care upon Him, for He careth for us.”

One, directing us to look to ourselves in mistrusting watchfulness ; the other inviting us to lean upon him, in confiding helplessness.

Every motive is here, to make us vigilant and to make us happy. Our salvation finished in the hands of Christ, our sanctification progressive by the operation of the Spirit, have proved his *past*, and assure us of his present faithfulness and love. Our condemnation cancelled, our adoption to sonship in Christ, and to co-heirship with Christ, sealed by the Spirit in the Saviour's blood, is the warrant of our peace and of the hope of glory.

Oh realize this condition by a life of faith upon the Son of God, and that faith will surely work by love, overcome the world, and purify the heart ! Realize this, and every dispensation is a stimulus to the flame—a testimony to a Father's holy promise-keeping love. Come, sickness, poverty, bereavement—come all ! but if Christ accompany them by a sense of his forgiving and adopting love, “ we have all things and abound !” One little drop from the cup of his mercy not only makes bitter things sweet, but all other things comparatively tasteless ! to know Him, to have communion and fellowship with Him, is the highest, holiest, and happiest condition on this side of heaven. It is an expanded ocean of calm and undisturbed enjoyment on which the travel-wearied soul long beaten by the storms, and buffeted

by the billows of this troublesome world, can fold its wings and settle down for all eternity.

Oh my dear brethren, if God hath indeed kindled that flame upon your consecrated hearts, be warned by the *caution*—be comforted by the *assurance*. He will not be unfaithful to you—be ye not unfaithful to yourselves. Ye are nothing in yourselves, but ye can do all things in Christ ; therefore live *with* Him in humble confiding fellowship—confessing, pleading, praising.

Live *on* Him, as the *branch* on the vine, deriving greenness, sap, leaves, and fruit—as the *wall* on the foundation, deriving strength and consistency. Live *to* Him, in the church, in your families, in the world ; and let your high and holy aim be—“ as for us and our house we will serve the Lord.” To this end *daily feed the flame*. The priest (v. 12.) burned wood on the altar every morning to replenish the fire : do you replenish the flame upon the heart-altar with *Christ*—*Christ* in his power, grace, wisdom, love, sympathy, example, and hope ; these are the *materials* with which to heap up the altar, and stimulate the flame. Thus shall it acquire strength, and rise higher and higher towards its eternal source, and its eternal destination ; and thus—“ the path of the just ” will be “ as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day,” for

“ *The fire shall ever be burning on the altar ; it shall never go out.*”

THE EPIPHANY.

## A SERMON

PREACHED IN BENMORE CHURCH, FERMANAGH, DIOCESE OF CLOGHER,

BY THE REV. HUGH HAMILTON, A.M.

ST. MATTHEW ii. 1, 2.

“ Now, when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, where is he that is born King of the Jews ? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.”

When the fulness of the time came for sending the Son of God into the world, the event of his birth was made known to angels and to men. For when Jehovah brought the first-begotten into the world he said “ Let all the angels of God worship Him.” By angels also he proclaimed to the shepherds the glad tidings of his birth—and at his Circumcision and Presentation in the Temple, as well as by the birth of John the Baptist, and the various incidents connected therewith, it was abundantly notified to the Jews and all that dwelt in Jerusalem—that the Son of God was come ; yet, as far as we learn, no very great or general attention was drawn to Him. The news does not appear to have reached the higher quarters, or if it had, it seems to have called forth but little notice ; the birth of one that was to save his people *from their sins*, had probably little to attract the attention of the worldly or profane. A few who looked for redemption in Jerusalem would treasure up these things and ponder them

in their hearts ; but for others they had no attractions. But a still further notice and of a different nature, was given in process of time. Persons of distinction—strangers from a distant land arrive—and their inquiries produce a general sensation ; for their questioning refers to matters of *temporal* interest. “ Where is He that is born King of the Jews ?” No sooner is the question made known, than “ Herod and all Jerusalem are troubled.” A Saviour may be slighted—a King cannot be disregarded. Herod’s crown appears to be endangered, and various motives would rouse at once the nobles and people to investigate circumstances apparently so pregnant with consequences of national interest. The results we know : and it is not my intention to dwell upon them—but, having pointed out how this visit of the wise men to Jerusalem, was calculated to excite the attention of all classes ; I would consider the fact, as regards the wise men themselves—as it bears upon the grand designs of God, and as it holds out instruction to us.

First—as to the wise men themselves : They appear to have been persons of much learning in their own land—and to have used their learning to good practical purpose. It would seem that they were skilled in science, and particularly in those branches which relate to the heavenly bodies ; they were what we term astronomers : and while engaged in observing the stars, their attention was drawn to a new and remarkable appearance—which, by some means, not told to us, they were led to consider as an intimation, that a child had been born who should be King of the Jews. We know from the 12th verse that they received direct communication from God, in a dream, and we may very properly conclude, that information had been given them before in some such manner. However it was, they were “not disobedient to the heavenly vision,” but though the way was very long, and probably the journey far from convenient, they followed the intimation given, and, like the Queen of Sheba, came from the utmost parts of the earth to see this great and glorious King ; and truly, Solomon in all his glory, could not be compared with Bethlehem's babe.

Thus we see what was their character, and what their conduct. They were men of observation, who paid attention to what they saw—and made good use of the means of knowledge within their reach : and they were persons who spared no pains in following the guidings of Providence, when the Lord made known to them the operations of his hands.

But, further, we may collect from this division of the subject.—the fact, that the Lord was known to others than to the dwellers in Judea, and that He was

pleased in this manner to prepare the Gentiles for receiving the Gospel when it should be preached among them ; and in which they would find fulfilled, those prophecies which were not altogether unknown in those lands whither the Jews had been carried, and where portions of Divine Revelation had been made known.

Thus we may see the bearing of these events upon the great designs of God.—We are now fully informed of that mystery which had been hid from ages and from generations, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs of gospel-blessings : and thus we see an early intimation given, that Jesus was to be “a light to lighten the Gentiles.”

There may be observed a more immediate effect which these circumstances were intended to produce—namely, to call attention to the prophecies among the Jewish rulers, and to call forth an authoritative interpretation of scripture, relative to the birth-place of the Messiah. Those who are acquainted with the subject must be aware, that the various particulars of the Saviour's birth, life, death, &c. &c., are not set forth in any regular order, in the Old Testament, but are to be collected from the whole testimony of the prophets, delivered at sundry times, and in divers manners ; so that it required considerable knowledge of scripture, and much close attention to the word of God, to discover those several particulars as they were spread over the entire surface of the sacred oracles. Here then were two points of much importance to be clearly ascertained: the *character* of the Messiah, and the *place of his birth* ; and the inquiry of the wise men establishes both.—They ask, “where is he that is born



King of the Jews?" and Herod demands of the Chief Priests "where Christ should be born." The Messiah is therefore recognised in his kingly character, for assuming which, Jesus was afterwards accused before Pilate, and sentenced to crucifixion: and further, the reply of the Chief Priests and Scribes, given in a public manner to Herod, and upon the authority of those whose office it was to interpret the word of God, determined the place where Christ was to be born, and established this very essential point in favour of the pretensions of Jesus to the character of Messiah.

Public attention was called to the prophecy of Micah, declaring Bethlehem to be the place; and the subsequent slaughter of the children, left the interpretation indelibly imprinted on the memories of those who suffered in their tenderest feelings, and doubtless on the minds of many to whom the report of that inhuman massacre would come.

Let us now consider this history, as calculated to convey instruction to ourselves.

We find here two parties concerned—the Wise Men on the one hand, and on the other, Herod and the Jewish Priests.

The one eager in their inquiries after the Messiah—the others, either *indifferent*—as the priests appear to have been, for they made, as far as we know, no further examination—or *hostile* as Herod, who in his anxiety to cut off the newborn king, sacrificed the infants of an entire region. Now which my brethren, ought we to imitate? Whose example of those do we in practice follow? To you my brethren, is proclaimed, more than Messiah's birth—and far more great and precious benefits are offered to you

in the gospel which we preach, than are contained in the mere announcement that one is born to reign over the House of Israel, since the Lord Jesus Christ is exalted to be a Prince as well as to be a Saviour. But, first of all, and chiefest, and best of all the tidings brought to sinners, is the glorious proclamation of pardon, purchased by his all-atoning blood. John Baptist exceeded all the prophets that had gone before, because he preached a present Saviour, living, moving and teaching among them. But *to us*, my brethren, though less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that we should preach amongst you the unsearchable riches of Christ dying, rising, ascending, pleading, "able to save to the uttermost, *all who come unto God by Him.*"

How, dear brethren, do you receive our testimony? We continually set before you the ample provisions, and the gracious invitations of the gospel of Christ. Oh, how have you treated them? Has it been like the Jewish priests, who satisfied to know the letter of the Scripture, sought for nothing further, and left the infant Jesus neglected and despised? Are you, I would ask, content *to know* that such and such things have been written, and that such and such events have taken place, and resting in that knowledge, seek no further? Now, to bring the matter to a plain and simple point—we at this season celebrate the Saviour's birth, and some of us commemorate moreover his most precious death. Let us inquire of our own hearts to what do these commemorations lead. Do they whet, as it were, our appetite for further knowledge and experience of the Saviour's love? Do we relapse into the same or perhaps greater indifference than we

had felt before? How, my brethren, shall we think on such indifference when we see Messiah throned in glory, or coming in the clouds of heaven to judge an assembled world? O, trifle not away the day of grace, nor suppose that indifference on such a subject can be lightly thought of by that Saviour, who shed his blood for our redemption, and has said "he that is not with me is against me." The Jewish priests appeared *indifferent*—at least they do not seem to have regarded the report of the Messiah's birth as worthy further attention—but not Herod's wrath was more cruel, than that exhibited by them and their successors in the subsequent persecutions with which they followed the adorable Jesus, and which they never relinquished, till they had crucified and slain the Lord of life. And brethren, let it be remembered that God regards and estimates our characters, not only by what may be our actual conduct, but by what he knows our principles and feelings would lead to, were we placed in circumstances calculated to call them into operation, in all the full developement of their enmity against his truth. "Say not in your hearts, if we had lived in their days, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets." The Jews so reasoned at that time, and we know how they behaved, they filled up the measure of their fathers and proved that they were indeed the "children of those that killed the prophets, and stoned them that were sent unto them."

But let us rather follow the example of the wise men of the east, who set themselves to improve and follow the light which God vouchsafed them; and brethren, how far more highly are we favoured! They had a star indeed to

guide, but we have a more sure word of prophecy—not glimmering for a time, and affording us a feeble ray to lead our steps; but shining as a bright and steady light, with all the clearness of meridian day. Prophecy accomplished, promises fulfilled—miracles confirming the word; and beside all, the Spirit's teaching which the Lord abundantly bestows on every humble inquirer after saving truth. With these advantages, must we not expect the wise men of the east to rise up against us in the day of judgment and condemn us, should we be found neglectful of that great salvation, so freely, fully, and richly offered in the gospel of Christ?

Nor have we like them to leave our homes in search of this salvation—no journeys need be taken—no wilderness is to be traversed, nor ocean to be crossed, we need not compass sea and land to find the Saviour—"Say not in your hearts who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down *from above*;) or who shall descend into the deep? (that is to bring up Christ again *from the dead*.) But what saith it? the word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach."

Oh, my brethren, how little do we reflect upon our privileges! how fearfully do multitudes trifle with the blessings so richly heaped around them! How many a Bible lies unopened on the shelf, or in the closet? How many moments, days, aye years, are passed with the word of life lying within the reach, under the very eyes of many a poor sinner who cares not for the treasure? How many are the proclamations of mercy sent forth from our pulpits, while hundreds are wilfully and perseveringly absent from the house of God, where the pardoning grace of our Lord is

published ; and “ shall I not visit for these things saith the Lord ! ”

The very cheapness of the gospel is to many a reason for neglecting it ; and oh ! how solemn is that word—may we lay it to heart ! “ All the day long have I stretched out my hand unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.”

Hear then, dear friends, the Saviour’s words, and let them sink down into your ears—“ I say unto you, many shall come from the east, and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God.”

But all, my brethren, are not guilty in this respect. Some have we trust, received the word with joy, and have followed on to know the Lord. Indifference in others has not kept them back from seeking for themselves. Opposition has not deterred, false lights have not prevailed to lead them astray. Can any of you say, “ I have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write Jesus of Nazareth the son of Joseph.” Happy are ye, O people saved of the Lord ! May you be enabled to say, I

have found him whom *my soul loveth !* and may you hold on your way rejoicing, till you see Him in his glory, crowned with his many crowns, and receiving the adorations of a ransomed world. Meanwhile, let us remember, that the wise men, having found the infant king, fell down before him with reverential acknowledgments of his royal dignity, and opening their treasures, presented their offerings, gold, &c.

Brethren, let us not fail in dutiful obedience to our sovereign Lord—nor forget that, while we owe him our love for having bought us with his blood, we also owe him our entire and devoted service as our king : and what can we render adequate to our infinite obligations, or worthy the acceptance of our God ? nothing adequate, nothing worthy, yet, let us rejoice to know, that the tribute of an humble heart and thankful spirit He does not despise.

“ Vainly we offer each ample oblation ;

Vainly by gold would his favour secure—  
Richer by far is the heart’s adoration,

Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.”

INVITATION TO UNITED PRAYER,  
FOR THE  
OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT,  
ON WEDNESDAY, 1ST OF JANUARY, 1840,  
BEING THE  
FIRST DAY OF THE NEW YEAR.

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DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD,

Again that season approaches in which guided, as trust, by Him from whom “all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed,” I have for these past three years invited the sincere followers of our blessed Saviour, to unite in a general concert of prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. I would, therefore, again renew the invitation FOR A SIMILAR CONCERT TO BE HELD ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE NEW YEAR; which will be on WEDNESDAY, 1ST JANUARY, 1840.

Whilst each revolving year has presented some special reasons for this devotional union, we are now encouraged to persevere, as the dawn of the new year appears to approach with some of those delightful streaks which inspire a hope that “the bright and morning star” may be near at hand: for answers have lately been vouchsafed to these former devotional unions which give promise that the day is hastening on when the Lord will fulfil his gracious word—“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, and see if I will not open the windows of Heaven, and pour you out such a blessing that there shall not be room to receive it.”

The happy events to which I refer are—First, the delightful intelligence transmitted by the Bishop of Calcutta, that the inhabitants of fifty-five villages in Northern India have simultaneously renounced idolatry. No less than a thousand of these converted heathens having



been actually baptized; whilst double that number have declared themselves desirous to follow their example. And this as soon as they are properly instructed and prepared for that holy sacrament.

Surely we may say, "of these tidings from a far country," "the Lord hath done great things for them. The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

The second event to which I refer, is the remarkable power of the Holy Spirit accompanying the outward means of grace which has lately taken place in different parts of Scotland, and more particularly at Kilsyth. There, according to the testimony of eye witnesses, whose reports have been examined and fully accredited by sober-minded and experienced ministers, it appears, that persons of almost all ages, and of different habits and dispositions, some among them open transgressors, have been brought to that godly sorrow for sin, which leads to repentance not to be repented of; and this followed by that lively faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, which has manifested itself by a conversation becoming the Gospel.

These are cheering facts. They are facts, however, which should only stimulate us to greater earnestness in prayer. For, along with these favorable signs, the new year approaches too much "as a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains." Let the following appearances, too visible, alas! to every discerning eye, suffice to show this:—First, The increasing open avowal of Infidelity. There was a time, when such sentiments were limited to the writings of self-called philosophers. These days are passed: and now we see large bodies of men glorying in their unbelief, publicly assembling together, to worship a god of their own. Not satisfied with making the press teem with their blasphemies, like the frogs in Egypt, entering the royal palace. There, in the presence of our Queen and her assembled Nobles, declaring it to be their purpose, vain as the imagination is, to create a new moral world, or a state of society in which all reverence to the Lord Jehovah and to his well-beloved Son, our only Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, should be entirely laid aside. These Infidels have spread themselves through many of our largest towns. They have their paid missionaries, their regularly constituted officers, and their periodical blasphemous publications.

Along with these and other advocates of Infidelity, although of a different school, we have the adherents of the Church of Rome in full activity. Their laymen forming themselves into "a Catholic Institute;" their bishops charging their clergy to exhort their flocks to pray for the conversion of Protestant England; and both spending large sums in the building of chapels, colleges, nunneries, and other religious

houses. No longer disguising their intentions, but boasting of their success, and exerting all their influence to bring the unwary under their dominion.

Whilst the kingdom of our Lord is thus openly assailed, many nominal Protestants are slumbering, and are thus affording opportunity to the enemy, whilst they are sleeping, to sow his tares. So that although we are assured that He who is "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS," will finally triumph over every foe, if the Lord does not effectually awaken us from our slumbers, we know not the evils to which his church may be exposed. Whilst these lowering clouds appear; our own national sins, and the present state of Christendom generally, lead the observer of the times to fear that the predicted days of judgment upon the gentiles may be approaching—that the numerous abominations of Christendom, which might cause the righteous "to sigh and to cry," are but symptomatic: prognostics of that period when, "Men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy."—Or forerunners of that day when, as the Prophet Daniel predicts, "the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand." These dark shades overspreading the dawn of the new year should make us consider those streaks of loving-kindness and tender mercy to which I have referred at the commencement of the invitation, as warnings from the Most High, or as calls to "redeem the time;" to avail ourselves of the present moment—to profit by the showers of blessing now bestowed—to entreat the Lord to pour upon all who believe in His name "the Spirit of grace and of supplication." That before these days of vengeance arrive, many may be led, in answer to their earnest cries, to flee from the wrath to come, and take shelter under His wings; who is a refuge from the storm, and a covert from the tempest; when the blast of the terrible is as a storm against the wall.

These are only a very few of the reasons, for the limits of this address will not admit of enlargement, which should call the Christian church to united prayer.

The motives which were urged in former invitations, to which you are referred, abide with increasing force.

It is enough now to say;—that the Lord has encouraged us to persevere in prayer, by His gracious answers—That the increasing activity of Papists and of Infidels are powerful calls upon his people to awake from their slumbers, and arouse themselves to their Divine Master's service:—Whilst the signs of the times, bring his words to our remembrance with almost invincible power—"Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments."

The following suggestions are respectfully offered to assist those who are desirous of uniting in this general concert for prayer.

1st. Let Christians follow the example of our blessed Lord (Mark i. 25), who rose up a great while before day for secret prayer. Let them thus secure the blessing of him, who says, "pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

2nd. Let them call upon the Lord in their families, for his Spirit to be poured upon themselves and their households, their neighbours, their country, the ministers of the Lord, the Churches of Christ, the remnant of scattered Judah and outcast Israel, and upon the Gentile world.

3rd. Let the ministers of the Lord afterwards privately meet with their brethren of their own communion, in earnest prayer for themselves, their flocks, the whole body of Christ, and the world at large; and then specially consult together upon the most effectual means for hastening the coming of the Lord's kingdom, and particularly for the continuance of such a general concert for prayer, that the year may proceed according to this devout commencement.

4th. Where circumstances will admit of a morning service, let the congregation be assembled, and in addition to the appointed prayers and a suitable sermon, let all who are devoutly disposed partake together of the supper of the Lord; or

5th. As may be more convenient, let the whole congregation meet in the evening for public worship, and let an appropriate discourse be preached.

May the Lord accompany these means of grace, or such others as may be adopted, with his abundant blessing. Oh! may it indeed be a season of special refreshment from the presence of the Lord.

Let this be the prayer of all who read this paper: and as the new year is now approaching, it would be a great kindness if those who approve the object, and have influence over the press, would republish and circulate this invitation, which any one, into whose hands it may fall, has full permission to do.

Peace be with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

Thus prays their affectionate brother and servant in the Lord.

JAMES HALDANE STEWART.

*St. Bride's, Liverpool.*

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# THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

## GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 COR. 1. 23. 24.

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No. XCIX.

SATURDAY, 21st DECEMBER, 1839.

PRICE 4D.

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THE RICH BLESSINGS OF THE GOSPEL.

### A SERMON,

PREACHED IN HAROLD'S CROSS CHURCH, DIOCESE OF DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER, 13, 1839,

BY THE REV. ROBERT J. MCGHEE, A.B.

(Chaplain.)

ROMANS—XV. 29, 30, 31, 32, 33.

“ And I am sure that, when I come unto you I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea: and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints; that I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed. Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.”

HAVING been so long providentially separated from you, my beloved friends, I have selected this portion of Scripture which seems appropriate to the return of a minister to his flock. The passage which I have selected is from the epistle of St. Paul to the church at Rome, in his prospect of coming to them. The circumstances were these: he had written, as you find in both of his epistles to the Corinthians, to make collections for the poor saints at Jerusalem, as he says in the 1st epistle, xvi. 1, 2, 3, “ As I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come: and when I come, whomsoever you shall approve by your letters, them will I send

to bring your liberality to Jerusalem.” You perceive, he was commanding them to make a collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem,—also in the 2nd epistle chapters viii. & ix; in these three chapters, you perceive directions are given to the church at Corinth to make collections for the poor saints. With these collections at Corinth, and another at Macedonia, Paul intended to go to Jerusalem. You will see this in the Acts of the Apostles xix. 21. “ After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the Spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, after I have been there, I must also see Rome.”

These little circumstances are important to attend to, because by these unintentional coincidences, as Paley has



pointed out, throughout the acts and epistles, in his *Horæ Paulinæ*, the authenticity of the Acts and apostolical Epistles is demonstrated. You will observe, St. Luke mentions in the Acts, Paul's intention to go through Macedonia and Achaia to Jerusalem, and from thence to Rome. You find Paul in the Acts xx. 22, at Miletus, on his way to Jerusalem—"And now," he says, "behold I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me; but none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself; so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." And in the next chapter, you find him at Cesarea; and at the 11th verse a prophet, Agabus, taking Paul's girdle, and binding his own hands and feet, saying, "Thus saith the Holy Ghost, so shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles." Paul then had great reason to apprehend the wrath and malice of the Jews when he should go to Jerusalem—and so, this epistle to the church of Rome was written from Corinth, stating in this chapter, the very same that Luke mentions in Acts xix. He says, verse 25, that he was on his journey to Jerusalem, to minister to the poor saints: he mentions, verse 26, the contributions he was taking from Macedonia and Achaia, and his purpose of proceeding from Jerusalem to Rome, thus he introduces the word of my text—"And I am sure that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints; that I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed. Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen."

Now, the two particular points to which I would call your attention in these verses are, first, *the blessing which the Apostle expects to bring to the church*

*at Rome*—"I am sure, that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ"—secondly, *the blessing which the Apostle expected from the church of Rome*—namely, the earnest prayers and supplications of his brethren for the temporal deliverance and direction which he needed—the providential mercy that should guide his footsteps to them, and the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, that, when he was with them, they might be mutually refreshed and strengthened together. May the Lord enable us now to consider these important subjects.

I. THE BLESSING WHICH THE APOSTLE EXPECTED TO CONVEY TO THE CHURCH AT ROME, "I am sure, that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." How did he come to them? He came to them as a poor, helpless, guilty sinner. The Gospel, to the unconverted sinner, is like its blessed Author and Master, when in the world, "when we shall see him, there is no beauty in him that we should desire him;" there is no beauty—no blessing in the Gospel to the poor unawakened sinner.

Now, consider that, the unawakened sinner knows no blessing in the Gospel—he is whole, and needs no physician. I went to see a poor woman the other day, who did not care for the Gospel. I asked her, will you allow me to go for a physician for you? No, Sir, she replied, I do not want one. Why? Because I am not sick. I said, you do not wish any one to speak to you of a physician for your soul, or you do not know you are a sinner;—when I ask you to go for a physician for your body, you say, no, because I am not sick, and when I speak of a physician for your soul, you are just as unwilling to have him—why?—because you do not know of your spiritual disease. Oh! my friends, "they that are whole need not a physician,"—the unawakened sinner sees no blessing in Christ—the worldly man sees no blessing in Christ—the poor sinner, whose heart is given to the world and covetousness—to his profits and pleasures, sees no blessing in the salvation that is in Christ: so, when the prophet Ezekiel went, by the command of God to speak to the sinners at Jerusalem, whether he spoke to them of the righteous judgment of God, or whether he spoke to them of the

blessed salvation of his God, it was all the same, he says in chap. xx. 49, when the Lord had commanded him to denounce his judgment against them, "then said I, ah, Lord God, they say of me, doth he not speak parables?" they did not choose to understand, they did not choose to receive it. And again, in speaking of the riches of the Lord's mercy, the Lord complains of them, Ezekiel xxxiii. 30, 31, 32, 33, "Thou, son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls, and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, come, I pray thee, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord. And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And lo! thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; for they hear thy words, but they do them not." Oh, my friends, the picture is drawn from nature, and therefore it is a true representation of man. Many come, as the Israelites went to the prophet, and say, 'come and let us hear the word of the Lord, let us come to church, to lecture, to the means of grace, let us hear what God says, what the preacher says.'—they come, and they hear the word, but they see no blessing in the Gospel of Jesus themselves, there is no fulness of blessing in Christ for their souls; they may hear, as Herod heard John, and do many things, but afterwards behead the prophet that preached to them: they may hear as Felix did, and tremble, but say to the apostle, "go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee," his heart was after his covetousness, "he hoped also, that money should be given him of Paul, that he might loose him, wherefore he sent for him the oftener and communed with him:" or they hear like Agrippa, "almost thou persuadest me to be a christian," but they are not persuaded after all:—multitudes such as these continue in their career, and when they come to the last alas! they have to say, "the harvest is past, and the summer is ended, and we are not saved," there is no blessing in the Gospel of Jesus for hearts such as these.

But Oh, my friends, when the sinner feels his want, when he feels himself a poor helpless, lost, ruined creature, then, the Gospel comes with a blessing, yea, fulness of blessing to his soul. The self-righteous pharisee expects to save himself; the pharisee, mentioned in St. Luke vii. with whom the Lord Jesus Christ dined, when the poor woman came to our blessed Master, and poured her tears over his feet, and wiped them with the hairs of her head, was indignant, and said within himself, "this man if he were a prophet would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him; for she is a sinner." You remember our Lord's reply, you remember the story of the two debtors, the one that owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty, you remember the good news of forgiveness to both, and you remember which of them it was that loved most.—So, in St. Luke xv. "the publicans and sinners drew near for to hear him," they came to Jesus, the precious physician, the glorious Saviour of the guilty,—and the scribes and pharisees murmured, saying, this man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." Blessed be God, he did receive sinners, and blessed be God, he does receive sinners, for "he is the same yesterday, to day and for ever." When the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Jesus comes to the heart of the sinner who knows and feels his own want and misery, he rejoices to see such a salvation, suited to his deep necessity as that which is proclaimed by Jesus Christ the Lord; aye, not only is the sinner who is just brought to the knowledge of his guilt; glad to hear the Gospel of Jesus, but the believer, the man who has known it, who has rejoiced in it, who over and over again has heard and delighted in the glad tidings of salvation, again rejoices, when the sweet sounds meet his ear, for again and again, he is learning by sad experience, the guilt, the corruption, the abomination, the vileness of his own heart;—he feels every day, more and more, that he wants a precious Saviour, that he wants a full Gospel suited to his necessity, and Christ grows in preciousness to him;—why? because he grows more and more in the deep conviction of his guilt and misery, and of his need of such a Saviour. It is to these men of whom Paul says, "their faith was spoken of throughout

the whole world," that he writes, "I am sure, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ."

Now consider, it is not Paul who says, "I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ," it is the Holy Ghost speaking by the mouth of Paul,—do not forget that, let us remember, we have need to remember, every time we open the Bible, and every chapter we read, this one truth: "this is the word of the Holy Ghost, this is the eternal truth of the eternal God." Oh, that we could remember that in reading the Bible! with what power the word would come to us, if we remembered, this is God's eternal truth, "let God be true, and every man a liar."

Now, the Holy Spirit here calls this the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. Do you ever find in the Bible, that, any of the things which the human heart, the natural heart of man desires and covets, and accounts great, God calls blessed? Does he call Nebuchadnezzar blessed, or Pharaoh blessed? When Nebuchadnezzar the king of the greatest empire in the world was walking in the midst of that great Babylon, and priding himself on his pomp, wealth, riches, magnificence, did God call him blessed? Does God call that man blessed whose ground as related in the parable brought forth plentifully, and who said, "I will pull down my barns, and build greater?"—does God call that man blessed "who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and who fared sumptuously every day?" Nay, even the heart of the unregenerate man, even the heart of the man who is ignorant of himself and ignorant of God is sufficiently enlightened to know that the term blessed is not to be applied to the man that has the loftiest and most exalted condition on this earth. Look at those who have gone bye, look at those who have filed the eye of the world in their day, do you call them blessed? Can any of you say, blessed is Alexander the Great, blessed is Napoleon—take any of the statesmen, philosophers, orators, poets, whose names have adorned the literature of your country, and commanded the admiration of the world, and do you call them blessed? would you apply the term blessed to any of them? would you say, blessed is Milton, blessed is Shakespeare, blessed are the great

writers of England, blessed is Scott, blessed is Byron, would you say blessed is Newton, blessed is Bacon? will you apply the term blessedness to these men, in reference to those talents that commanded the admiration of the world? However you may admire, and however you may envy the exaltation of such men while they live, "when their breath goeth forth, they return again to their dust, and then, all their thoughts perish." You would not say, blessed are they for all their gifts, for all their fame, for all their mighty talents? No, "blessed" is not the term which even the ignorant and unregenerate conscience dares to apply to individuals such as these. What is their blessedness? If any I have named, or could name, are to be called blessed, their blessedness can only consist in this, that God stamps his blessing upon them—"blessed is the man whose iniquity is forgiven, and whose sin is covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin:" there is the blessedness, my friends,—there is the only blessedness;—it is not, blessed is Nebuchadnezzar, but, blessed are the three men that in the strength of their God, rather than abandon their Lord and Master, went with joy into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. It is not blessed is the man "clothed in purple and fine linen,"—no, but blessed is "Lazarus that was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table." It is not blessed is Saul, thought highly of, admired, selected as an instrument of persecution by all the chief priests and all the scribes, and going with authority to Damascus,—it is not blessed is Saul, but blessed is Paul, persecuted, friendless Paul, counted the off-scouring of all things, stoned, "in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by his own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness," cast away by all men, and counted the off-scouring of all things,—blessed is Paul—why? because when Paul went forth to his fellow-sinners, to the church of Rome, or any where else, he could say, "I know, I am sure, that when I come unto you, I shall come in the ful-



ness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ." Blessed was Saul, cast down as a great sinner, and the feet of Jesus, and crying, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do." Oh! may you know what this is—may you know what true blessedness is, my dear friends.

But he says, I will come to you, not only with a blessing, but with the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. Now, why does he say, the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ? Because the Gospel of Jesus testifies of Jesus—because Jesus is the alpha and omega of the salvation proclaimed in the Gospel of Christ. What was Paul's Gospel?—what was the Gospel he spoke of? He says, I Cor. ii. 1, 2. "I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God; for, I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." There was Paul's Gospel;—so he says, in Gal. i. 8. "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accused."

What was this Gospel, so pregnant with blessing, and with the fulness of the blessing of which the Apostle said, he would come to the church of Rome? It was the Gospel, testifying of the Lord Jesus Christ for lost and guilty sinners, because it testified of the fulness of righteousness that was in Christ for sinners. When the sinner is awakened to see his own lost and ruined state, the first thing that oppresses him is the sense of his sins;—perhaps he has been a Sabbath breaker, a liar, a blasphemer, an adulterer, a profligate, a drunkard,—has lived in some state for which his conscience tells him God must condemn him,—he is alarmed, he is pricked to the heart—like those to whom Paul testified that they had slain the Lord of glory, and he asks, "men and brethren, what shall I do?" But, when his heart is still farther touched, when he knows more of his own character, it is not his sins that distress him, it is not merely this iniquity that first oppressed his conscience—no, he begins to find that all his righteousness is as filthy rags, that his prayers are an abomination—his reading the Bible an abomination—his

sacraments an abomination—his charity an abomination—all he had done to make his soul fit to appear in his Maker's presence, and atone for his sins, an abomination,—all his righteousness, all that raised his character in the world, supposing he attained moral estimation among his fellow men, he begins to feel to be an abomination; he begins to feel that he has no righteousness to stand in, and that he is "poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked."

The Gospel then comes with fulness of the blessing of righteousness to his soul; it tells him of that precious Jesus who "is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." You have no righteousness—Christ has righteousness, he has accomplished it all, fulfilled it all; and do you know whether the Lord receives this righteousness for you?—yes, "the Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake,"—you feel, God is angry with you for your righteousness, he is satisfied for His righteousness, he will magnify the law and make it honorable, it is not the obedience of a creature but the obedience of the Son of God that magnified and made it honorable. When Prince Henry, afterwards Henry the fifth, violated the law of the land, and the chief justice committed him to prison, conscious of his own crime, and feeling how he was bound to respect the law, he quietly submitted to the sentence of the court, and did not dare to repine.—When it was told to his father, Henry IV., he said, "I thank God I have a son that honors the law, and a judge that is not afraid to put it into execution." I do not mean to draw a parrallel, but I say, the obedience of a Son of a King to the law magnified the law, and exalted the law in the eyes of all, and vindicated the majesty and authority of it more than the obedience of any poor subject,—and if such a story is told respecting the law of England, what shall we say of the obedience of the Son of the King of glory to that law which is the rule of his creatures? Jesus took on him our flesh, Jesus took on him our nature, and yielded the obedience of God in the flesh of man, to the righteous holy law of his Father and his God,—he has magnified the law,—and what is that to you? why, if you are a believer in the Gospel of Jesus, it is not your righteousness or man's righteousness, but it is the righteousness of God that is yours, so the apostle says



2d. Cor. v. 21,—he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." What a blessed thing for the sinner when he is enabled to say, that it is not his own righteousness he has to stand in, but the glorious righteousness of his precious, ever-blessed Jesus.

Jesus, thy blood and righteousness  
My beauty is—my glorious dress;—  
Midst flaming worlds in these arrayed,  
With joy I shall lift up my head.

Oh what a fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Jesus does the righteousness of Christ bring to the heart of the poor unrighteous sinner when he can lay his hand on the promises of God and say, it is all mine in Christ Jesus! What wonder the apostle said, "I am sure, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ!"

But this is not all, it is not merely the fulness of righteousness, but the fulness of pardoning grace and mercy, the fulness of pardoning love. The believing sinner's conscience is continually harassed under the sense of his own guilt and misery;—mark, believer, there is continually a succession of corruptions rising up in your heart, and, according to the experience of this apostle, "warring against the law of your mind, and bringing you into captivity to the law of sin in your members," so that you are often obliged to say, how is it possible I can be a believer? The world sees nothing in your conduct, perhaps, inconsistent with your profession,—you may be enabled, through God's grace, to walk in the ways of holiness, yet when you come to look within, and bring the spiritual law to bear upon your own corrupt heart, you feel sunk into the very dust with the sense of your own guilt, your language is, "in this tabernacle I groan, being burthened,"—your language is, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Romaine says of Paul, "that 'Oh' came from the bottom of Paul's heart, for he felt what he was, a sinner." Well then, the Gospel comes with fulness of forgiveness, suitable in all its magnitude and all its glory to your guilty conscience, and you are enabled to say with Paul, with the same breath in which he says, "O, wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death,"—the Holy Ghost breaks in on your soul with the fulness of the blessing

of the Gospel of Christ, and enables you, to say, "I thank God through Jesus Christ;"—"there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." The fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Jesus meets the deep necessities of the poor guilty sinner, and tells him of the glad tidings, that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin," bids him "trust in the Lord for ever, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him there is plentious redemption, and he will redeem Israel from all his sins." Look at the beautiful picture given of God's mercy in psalms ciii. of the fulness of blessing of the Gospel. Verse 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plentious in mercy, he will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger for ever, he hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities; for as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy towards them that fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us,"—measure the altitude of the heavens above the earth, the heavens in which these stars are fixed of which we cannot measure even the angle of their disc from this world, and you will be able to measure the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. Pursue the sun as he goes down in the west, and every step you take to the west you leave a step to the east, there is still the diameter of the earth between the east and the west,—bring the ends of the diameter of the earth together, and then you will bring near the sins of the sinner which God has put away as far as the east is from the west! Oh the fulness, the rich pardoning grace for you, poor, helpless, needy, guilty sinners. If you do not know the pardoning love that is in your God, you know nothing, if you do not know the salvation that is in Christ for your soul, you know nothing. Talk of educating man, of instructing men in arts and sciences, and leaving them without the knowledge of Christ;—there are two latin lines of which this is the translation, "If you know Christ it is no matter what you are ignorant of, and if you do not know him, it is no matter what you know." Are there any of you, whose conscience is accusing you, who are saying, if the preacher knew this sin—if he knew what a hardened wretch I am—

how dead—how unbelieving I am—how I hate the Bible—if he knew the sins that my conscience accuses me of—if he knew these he would not give such hope as this to me. What does God say to you in the Gospel? He comes in the fulness of mercy, proclaiming pardon to you for all your sins—and if they were ten thousand times as bad, “come and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” Is not that good news?—“The fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.” The reason why it is so full is this, that from first to last, the whole work is of Jehovah—all this blessing is in Christ Jesus—man has no part in it—you have no part in saving your own soul; if you think you have, you know nothing of salvation—because the blessing is, that it is all treasured up in Christ. Now, let me just call your attention to Colossians i. 14, “In whom we have redemption through his blood” (that is in Christ,) “even the forgiveness of sins.” Who is this in whom we have this redemption? In him, “who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature, for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers, all things were created by him, and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist,” Mark this description of Jehovah Jesus, “God manifest in the flesh,” “He is the head of his body, the church; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence; for it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, and (having made peace through the blood of the cross) by him to reconcile all things unto himself, by him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven; and you that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled”—he is writing to the Colossians, and he says *you*. Well, to how many in this congregation is this to be applied? Is it to be applied to your consciences? Now, think of this—“*you*, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now, hath he reconciled.”—

Does that apply to you? Oh! I hope so—I trust so—I trust you may be enabled to say, I who was an enemy, alienated in my mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled. The apostle proceeds, “in the body of his flesh through death.” Look at the picture of those reconciled to God by Jesus “to present you holy, and unblameable, and unprovable in his sight, if ye continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven.” Then what are you? If you are reconciled to God, you shall be presented “holy, and unblameable, and unprovable in his sight.” What fulness of blessing must be in that Gospel, when the poor sinner can be so reconciled to his God! Well might Paul say, “When I come unto you, I am sure I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.” The next chapter treats on the same thing, and take this warning, “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.” That abominable lying, liberal philosophy was in the days of Paul, it was at Colosse as well as in England and Ireland—that vile philosophy—Colossians ii. 8, 9, “Beware lest any man spoil you, through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ; for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” Beware, lest lying Socinianism come into your heart, and take away from the Godhead of Immanuel, “in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;” mark the rest, “And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power,” completely washed from all your iniquity—washed in that glorious fountain, which is opened for sin and for uncleanness, clothed in the righteousness of your Lord and Saviour, white and clean in that fine linen which is the righteousness of the saints, “without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish.” Oh, the glorious fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ! is it not a glorious fulness when the sinner is enabled to look to Jesus, so that he may take up the language of Isaiah xii. 2,

"behold God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid, for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song, he also is become my salvation." Oh, what a blessed thing, that a poor sinner can come to his brethren in the same way as Paul went to the church at Rome, in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ; for what is Paul? an inspired apostle, it is true; but what could Paul teach? nothing but what is written in this glorious word, as he says himself, "who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom you believed, even as God gave to every man." The Gospel is the same as it was in the days of Paul, Jesus is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," and however poor or weak we may be, however mean and contemptible instruments as compared with such a glorious apostle as Paul, yet, if we set forth the same Gospel, the same Jesus, as Paul preached, we come to you in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. And may the Lord bring home that precious gospel to your hearts and mine, my beloved friends.

We might go on through the catalogue of the glory and fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ; the fulness of wisdom, "in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;" the fulness of power, "all power is given to him in heaven and in earth;" the fulness of love, "I am the good shepherd, the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep," and all the fulness of the blessings that are in Christ, conveyed by the fulness of the Spirit to the sinner, "for all things are yours," if you are looking to Jesus, "all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

We shall just pause on one of these, the fulness of the love of Christ: here comes in that blessing of the gospel by which the power of the gospel is manifested in the Lord's people, "the love of Christ constraineth us because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead, and that he died for all, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again," here is the love of Christ, bringing obedience into the heart, "not by might or by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts"—bringing obedience into the heart, how? by pour-

ing love—by pouring the love of Christ, drawing out the affections of the sinner, giving him new affections by manifesting the fulness of the love that is in Jesus, to his heart and conscience; therefore, saith this apostle, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service," the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Jesus comes from your Redeemer to you, that you may render to him the fulness of your hearts, that you may mortify your members that are upon the earth, and that you may be enabled to render these members to your Lord and Saviour, not by constraint but willingly, with holy, happy love to your Master, because he has taken you from your guilt, and washed you in his own blood, and carries you in his arms, and "keeps you by his power though faith unto salvation."

I have dwelt so long on this first part of my subject, that I must shorten the remarks on the latter part of it. The apostle says he comes with a blessing to give them, and then he entreats a blessing from them.

II. I proceed then to consider, THE BLESSING WHICH THE APOSTLE EXPECTED FROM THE CHURCH AT ROME. "I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me, in your prayers to God for me." Oh, friends, if the Apostle was to come with the fulness of blessing to his brethren at Rome, he entreats from them by the Lord Jesus Christ and his Spirit, their earnest prayers and supplications to God for him. And if we, dear brethren, come to preach to you the salvation that is in Christ, what need have we to entreat and implore your prayers to God for us!—Oh, dear friends, if the flock desire a blessing for themselves, they must pray for their ministers: if we set forth the blessing of salvation that is in Christ Jesus to you, it is all in vain, unless the power of the Holy Ghost accompanies the word, "Paul may plant and Apollos water, God must give the increase." We might as well preach to the pillars of this church, as preach to a congregation unless God the Holy Spirit accompanies the word to their hearts; and if it is the power of God that blesses his word alone to the heart, Oh, consider, that the humblest member of



the congregation can apply to God for that power and blessing, either minister or flock as well as the most influential. All may not preach, but all, if they are Christians, can pray; all may not be able to use the means of conveying outward instruction to others, but all can pray for a blessing to that God who alone can make that instruction profitable to the people; therefore, beloved friends, let me use that language to you, I beseech you, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that for my dear brother and myself, you strive together with us in your prayers to God for us, that you call on the Lord to send a blessing on our poor ministrations, and that he would apply them effectually to your hearts; for that is our consolation, that no matter what our weakness may be it is our blessed privilege to know, that it is "not by might or by power," that it is not by the wisdom of words, but by the energy of the Holy Ghost that ablessing can accompany the word to the sinner's heart, and bring joy, life, light, peace, comfort, everlasting salvation to his soul.

You see the Apostle entreats them to pray for temporal deliverance from the persecution of the Jews, "that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea, and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints;" that the saints might receive with gratitude and love the contributions he was taking from Achaia and Macedonia, "that I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed." He entreats them to pray for God's providential mercies, and providential direction and guidance, and you see, beloved friends, even in the case of Paul himself, how entirely indebted to the Lord he was for his providential mode of directing and guiding him. I desire to bless the Lord's mercy for keeping me, and encreasing my strength, and giving me the privilege of coming to you to address you. Since I left this place, I saw one beloved friend weeping, in deep sorrow, over the loss of an only son, and that son was a pupil of my own, and he died of the very complaint I had myself. Death visits all of every age; strength, health, youth, are no safeguards against

death. Oh, consider this, ye that are young! Oh, think, and ask yourselves whether you know the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. It is by God's providence that we are spared among you, his gracious providence teaches us how we are depending on his almighty hand, he can lay us by, or strengthen us and enable us to speak his word, all must be his, we must look for his providential care and direction in all things, and if we expect a blessing, we must look for and receive it all alone from God.

Paul desires them to pray that he may be brought to them. How was he brought? See, how the providence of God brought him; the providence of God handed him over at Jerusalem to the secular power, and he was obliged to appeal to Cæsar against the authorities of Jerusalem, and he did go to Rome; but he went, not as a free Apostle, he went as a prisoner, he went in chains, and there he finished his course under the persecution of the cruel monster Nero. Notwithstanding, he asked their prayers; and their prayers, no doubt were poured out to God, and their prayers were answered, but not in the way Paul chose. The Lord does not answer our prayers as we choose, he answers our prayers as he pleases and for his own glory; that was the way he answered Paul's prayer. Look to Paul's persecution, and the way he was conducted to Rome; the providence of God illustrated his own glory and magnified his grace.

And then he entreats them to pray, "that I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed." Mark, Paul might go to the church of Rome whose faith was spoken of through the whole world, and yet Paul could not be refreshed with the church of Rome, unless God's gracious Spirit gave to the Apostle and gave to the flock the privilege and joy of being refreshed together. And if it was his case, is it not ours? you and I may be hearing and preaching the word of life, but cannot see a blessing attend that word, unless our God grants that we may be refreshed. Now, pray, that we may be refreshed, pray, that this word may refresh our hearts, that we may consider the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. The apostle



tells them what this refreshing is, "I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end you may be established," that is, may be comforted together by the mutual faith, both of you and me, comforted together by our mutual faith, strengthened together in speaking of our precious Lord and Master, the riches of his grace, the fulness of his salvation, the glorious hope that our souls have in Him, that we may be comforted and refreshed together by the mutual faith of all of us.

Now, let me entreat, that you will pour out your prayers for my dear brother and myself, that we may be refreshed, that we may be comforted, that our souls may be edified, that we may be lifted up to our precious Lord and Master, enabled to look to him, to believe, to rejoice in him, to walk in holy hope, love and obedience to him who has loved us, and given himself for us.

"The God of peace be with you all. Amen."

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## THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY

## GENESIS iii.—4

“And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die.”

For want of examination, the Holy Scriptures too generally remain a sealed book: and errors of a very fatal character are handed down from generation to generation:—errors which, while they oppose the eternal truth of God, and cause his word and ways to be evil spoken of, strike at the root of the soul's salvation both here and hereafter. It is very desirable to have a clear and just perception of any useful subject to which the thoughts of man's mind may be directed—but, the importance of accurate knowledge of the things which God has revealed is incalculably great, inasmuch as the concerns of eternity outweigh those of time. When man attempts to find out and to account for God's dealings by the exercise of his own wisdom, he but demonstrates his own folly, and every step he takes in the investigation, unaided by the written word, and the teaching of the holy Spirit from whom its inspiration proceeds, serves but to advance his progress in a labyrinth from which nothing can extricate him but a divine interposition. The origin of evil is one of the subjects which has exercised to a very great extent the ability and ingenuity of man, and many able and elaborate treatises have been written upon it: but is it not strange that as it is God alone who can give the account, they should altogether overlook or only partially take into account the brief but lucid statement which removes all doubts, and is amply sufficient to satisfy the mind of every humble inquirer?

The subject is in itself one of infinite importance, for if sin do not exist, a Saviour from it is not needed: if it does exist, and yet that its character must be determined by man who loves it and not by God who hates it, then will it be met by some worldly expedient which will prove quite inefficacious in securing the pardon of it, or victory over it. Here we at once arrive at the great secret why the Gospel message is so lightly esteemed, and the Saviour rejected. Sin is not regarded as the transgression of God's holy, just, and good law: it is spoken of as a light thing—as existing in atrocious acts only, but as trivial and venial when appearing in words or in tempers. Hence it is palliated—quietly pleaded for—or boldly defended. It is not the part of sound wisdom to despise an enemy, and a good soldier will never do it. Neither is it the part of sound wisdom for an immortal being to risk the happiness of his immortality, and to make light of that holy Being who only can confer it upon him—and who in conferring it will invariably bring honor to his own truth, wisdom and holiness. Having made these few observations I would entreat you to meditate upon the account which God gives of the entrance of that sin which has brought a curse upon this originally beautiful because perfect creation—and also upon subjects which the chapter contains, especially the salvation which is in Christ.

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## THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY

1 CORINTHIANS xiii. 13.

“And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.”

This verse has, it is to be feared, been wrested, like some others, to the destruction of those who, led by sound more than sense, have ignorantly or presumptuously put away from them their system of religion—the only foundation for the hope of a sinner—and have vainly attempted to lay some other. Christ is the sure foundation which infinite wisdom has laid, and upon which infinite love places firmly and for ever all the lively stones which constitute the walls of the spiritual building. Every other foundation must fail, because it is laid by man's folly and insatiation. Can any thing temporal sustain that which is eternal? Can the acts of any creature atone for an offence against the great Creator? If there were no deviation from perfect love on the part of a creature, there would be unsinning obedience, and consequently no need of a Saviour—no need of an atonement—no need of pardon. But in man there is a sad departure from perfect love, and his own conscience tells him so; hence it is that he sets about to pacify it by a variety of expedients, all of which prove his enmity against God and his ignorance of the truth—for he rejects God's method of justifying a sinner, and he goes about to establish one of his own. What a strange thing would it be for a prisoner guilty of an atrocious crime to be allowed to set aside the law which he has broken—to substitute a new one in its place—and with perfect self-complacency demand from the Judge a sentence of acquittal? Yet this

would not be half so preposterous, or absurd, or insulting, as for man, who lies in the depths of his apostacy, and is a rebel against his God, to come before him with any other cry save for mercy, or with any offering save that of the one perfect sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. While we are not to attempt to separate things which God hath joined together—neither are we to confound together the things which it is his will should be kept distinct. Acceptable obedience must and can only flow from faith; and that which God has respect to in the pardon of sin, he has respect to in the approval of those works of righteousness in which the redeemed sinner delights to abound. If ever there was a time when this thirteenth chapter claimed the diligent and sober perusal of the Church, it is now, when there is a sad degree of extravagance exhibited in the interpretation of many parts of Scripture—when novelties are sought out and embraced with avidity, and when it is expected that the wisdom discernible in the writings of our venerable Reformers and others should give way to the shallow knowledge and very limited experience of mere novices. O! that we all possessed the sound mind and the humble sanctified heart of the great Apostle of the Gentiles! Well we may possess these, for they are common to all the heirs of salvation. The principle which influences all is the same,—the degrees of its operation doubtless vary.

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